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Inter-Arab Affairs

Iraqi Rapprochement With Egypt, U.S. Role Viewed

NC1902103693 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 17 Feb 93 p 1

[Text] AL-AHALI has learned that the contacts between Cairo and Baghdad will take a new turn when an Iraqi delegation visits Egypt. The delegation will submit proposals on bringing views closer and on opening a new page in relations in accordance with agreed-upon conditions.

AL-AHALI also learned that rapprochement between the Arabs and Iraq and between Iraq and Egypt in particular has been discussed by certain Arab countries, particularly Gulf countries. Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates have approved rapprochement in principle, while Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have expressed reservations.

Diplomatic sources said that Egypt believes in the inevitable opening of the Gulf file and in Iraq shouldering any decisions, sanctions, or compensation decided by the Arab countries should they agree to address relations with Iraq under the auspices of the Arab League.

The same sources revealed that Arab countries such as Libya, Tunisia, Palestine, and Jordan are playing a role in working out Iraqi-Egyptian-Arab rapprochement. The sources said that Syria expressed reservations at first, but then agreed according to specific conditions that would prevent differences from emerging.

The sources said that the United States was aware of the Iraqi contacts with Egypt and expressed no reservations. Other contacts on the same level also were made with the United States, which resulted in two U.S. delegations visiting Baghdad.

League Denounces Israel's 'Heavy Stick' Policy

NC1802131493 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The Arab League Secretariat says yesterday's Israeli attacks against south Lebanon prove that the Israeli Government under Yitzhaq Rabin still continues a policy of wielding a heavy stick. The Secretariat said the world had hoped that Rabin's government would opt for peace by implementing international resolutions, particularly Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for Israel's withdrawal from south Lebanon to enable the legitimate Lebanese Government to extend its sovereignty countrywide.

The source told our correspondent that the Israeli aggression against south Lebanon is another link in the chain of Israeli violence in the occupied Arab territories. The source added that this policy contradicts international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Official on Egypt-Gulf Arab States Arms Venture

NC1802142393 Paris AFP in English 1326 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb 18 (AFP)—Gulf Arab states plan to return to a joint arms venture with Egypt after a boycott of nearly 15 years in protest at Cairo's peace treaty with Israel, an Egyptian official said on Thursday.

"The Arab Organisation for Industrialisation (AOI) is on its way to revival. There have been contacts for the return of Gulf states and you will hear very good news soon," said Mahmud Fahmi, head of an AOI delegation to an international arms show in Abu Dhabi.

Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) walked out of the Cairo-based AOI in 1978 after Egypt signed the Camp David peace accords with Israel which led to a peace treaty the following year.

Most Arab nations cut ties with Cairo in protest but they restored them five years ago. Egypt's relations with Gulf states improved after it joined a U.S-led coalition in driving Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

The AOI was set up in 1975 with a capital of around one billion dollars as the biggest joint Arab military venture. But its capital is much lower now because of the withdrawal of Gulf members, according to Egyptian sources here.

"Their withdrawal has not affected production. On the contrary it sharply increased and we developed several new types of weapons," Fahmi told AFP. "We have largely benefited from cooperation with foreign companies."

With the destruction of Iraq's military arsenal in the Gulf war, Egypt has emerged as the leading Arab arms producer. It has exported more than 200 million dollars a year worth of weapons to African and Arab states, including the Gulf Arab countries.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat, Officials Discuss Memo for Christopher

JN1802200693 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, held a meeting in Amman this afternoon with brothers Faysal al-Husayni, head of the advisory committee of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations; Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat [member of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks]; and a number of PLO Executive Committee members.

During their meeting, the officials reviewed current Palestinian issues and the contents of the Palestinian memorandum that the members of the Palestinian delegation will present to U.S. Secretary of State Warren

Christopher during his meeting with them in Jerusalem. The memorandum conveys the Palestinian viewpoint regarding the implementation of Resolution 799 providing for the return of the Palestinian deportees, as well as the resumption of the Middle East peace talks. During the meeting, Abu-'Ammar also discussed the developments of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the Zionist occupation authorities' acts of repression against the defenseless Palestinian citizens.

During his current visit to Amman, brother Abu-Ammar is scheduled to meet with His Majesty King Husayn of Jordan and a number of senior Jordanian officials.

Qaddumi Views Security Council President's Remarks

LD1802180593 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] To clarify the statement of the UN Security Council president on the issue of the Palestinian deportees, brother Abu-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], head of the PLO Political Department, stated the following:

What the UN Security Council president said was a mere statement delivered inside the UN Security Council during a discussion that took place between him and the Israeli ambassador. This statement does not have the form of a UN Security Council resolution or statement. Some press circles misquoted this statement; also, the Israeli Government attaches more political meaning to this statement that it actually has.

The PLO is determined to urge the UN Security Council to convene to study the report of the UN secretary general and take the necessary measures vis-a-vis Israel so that it responds to Resolution 799 and fully implements it by allowing the immediate and safe return of all Palestinian deportees to their homeland.

Notes Conditions for Talks Participation

LD1802200893 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] In a statement to the Tunisian publication ECHOUROUK, published today, brother Faruq Qaddumi linked the participation of the Palestinian delegation at the bilateral negotiations to two conditions. First, finding a quick solution for the return of the Palestinian deportees; and second, a change in the Israeli positions regarding the negotiations and the practices of the army of occupation inside the occupied land.

Brother Abu-Lutf [Qaddumi] added that it was very difficult for the Palestinian negotiations delegation to go to Washington while the issue of the Palestinian deportees was not solved yet. Additionally, Israel should raise positive proposals and plans that must differ from those submitted during the previous eight rounds of talks.

On the tour of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in the region, brother Abu Al-Lutf added that it appears that the tour has a routine characteristic; consequently it will not change the current situation a great deal.

He described the moves undertaken by the new U.S. Administration as not serious vis-a-vis its endeavors to find a just and peaceful settlement in the region.

Hamas-PLO 'War of Words' Reported Over Deportees

JN1802153893 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] Jordanian-Palestinian talks began in Amman today between Jordan's King Husayn and PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, who arrived in the Jordanian capital 24 hours ahead of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Specifically, the two sides will discuss the peace negotiations and the possibility of resolving the deportee issue so that the Arabs will be able to participate in the upcoming round of peace talks, which could be held as early as April.

According to informed sources, the Arab parties will discuss with Christopher the possibility of reaching an agreement on a schedule for the repatriation of the deportees within a maximum of six months, as well as increasing the number of the first group to return from 101 to 200, which would represent half the total number of deportees. A Palestinian source said that the proposed agreement contains an Arab demand for a U.S. pledge to stop Israel from carrying out any new deportations.

Reports about such an agreement coincide with an escalation in the tone between Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the PLO, particularly Fatah. This has become apparent in the war of words launched by Palestinian ambassador in Amman al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, who strongly criticized deportee spokesman 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi for casting doubt on the PLO's right to represent the Palestinian people.

In an article in SAWT AL-SHA'B, a prominent member of the Muslim Brotherhood, Ziyad Abu-Ghanimah, replies to 'Abd-al-Rahim. After supporting what al-Rantisi stated, Abu-Ghanimah says: If al-Rantisi's statements represent a crossing of the national red lines, then what is the meaning of accepting Resolution 242, which legalizes the recognition of the legitimacy of the Zionist entity's usurpation of Palestine?

Also, Muslim Brotherhood deputies in their Friday sermons are waging a campaign against the PLO, accusing it of conspiring against the deportees. One of them even called on the Palestinian people to rise against and topple 'Arafat.

Fatah, Hamas Reportedly Agree To Resume Dialogue

TA1802150793 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 18 Feb 93 pp 1, 15

[By Samir Sa'd-al-Din]

[Excerpts] It has been learned from informed Palestinian sources that contacts were held last week between Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Fatah in a bid to resume the dialogue between the two sides and implement what was agreed on in Khartoum. [passage omitted]

Those sources add that it was agreed during these contacts to set the middle of next month as the date for the two sides' meeting in Khartoum. It is expected that members of the two teams that had attended the earlier talks in Tunis and Khartoum will participate in this meeting. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Envoy in Jordan Criticizes Hamas

JN1802192293 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 17 Feb 93 pp 1, 16

[By Riyad Mansur]

[Text] The PLO has accused the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, of foiling all the agreements it signed with Fatah by continuing to launch media campaigns and allegations.

In reply to a question posed to him by SAWT AL-SHA'B, Palestinian ambassador to Jordan al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim said several Hamas leaders in Jordan are talking about agreements that are different from those concluded in Tunis. He said the PLO has thus far not published the minutes of the meeting [in Tunis], noting that Hamas' continued allegations will prompt the PLO to publish the minutes.

'Abd-al-Rahim strongly criticized statements by the spokesman for the Palestinian deportees, Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, when he said that the PLO is not the representative of the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian ambassador accused anyone who agrees with such statements of supporting the policies of the Israeli enemy. He added that these statements provide suspicious free service to Israeli ambitions to help fragment and circumvent Palestinian representation.

The Palestinian ambassador considered al-Rantisi's statements a crossing of national red lines, an encroachment on the sanctity of the Palestinian people's struggle, and an endangerment of the accomplishments by the martyrs of Palestine and all its heroes.

Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim said that al-Rantisi, those who give him instructions, and the Western media serving them are all currently accepting, perhaps like they did before, the attack launched by Yitzhaq Rabin on the PLO and on president Yasir 'Arafat—the symbol of Palestinian struggle—to portray the Palestinian people as being without representation.

The Palestinian dignitary said that the PLO stood with all its strength and exploited all its relations with other countries on the deportee issue and their immediate return to their homeland and families. He noted that the PLO announced that there will be no negotiations under deportation because it is responsible for all the Palestinian people, including all their affiliations, and because it wants to remove the policy of deportations from the Israeli dictionary once and for all.

Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim added: The deportees' spokesman knows that the PLO has provided the deportees in their camp with all means of existence and struggle, as well as protection against the harsh weather conditions.

Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim explained that the PLO has always worked to create an atmosphere of democracy in the arena of Palestinian national action whenever possible.

'Abd-al-Rahim said that the PLO is not now, nor has it been at any other time, against the call by al-Rantisi or those who preceded him to hold legislative elections, outlining that the advocates of elections under circumstances which do not permit their holding are working to distort our people's national political infrastructure and offer the enemies of this people a gratuitous, if not conspiratorial service.

The Palestinian ambassador to Jordan added: All these forces set obstructionist conditions to get around the fact that the PLO's cadres and candidates have won more than 90 percent of the elections in the Palestinian arena that have had any political meaning.

'Abd-al-Rahim stressed that the important thing is that the PLO has earned its role as representative of the Palestinian people by the struggle waged by its martyrs and the patriotism of its leaders. By so doing, the PLO scored an accomplishment that brought forth the Palestinian peoples' national identity and national unity. This accomplishment was scored a long time ago, he added. He indicated that nobody has the right to destroy the national edifice.

Ambassador 'Abd-al-Rahim affirmed that the PLO will continue to make extensive efforts to ensure the repatriation of the deportees and to put an end to the deportation policy, given that the Palestinians are the responsibility of the PLO.

In reply to another question, the Palestinian envoy said that it was Hamas which started the war of words. It alone, he added, is responsible for the demise of the agreements it signed with Fatah. He expressed the belief that what Hamas has done was the outcome of pressures put on it by those supporting it and providing it with financial assistance. This is, he said, because it had an agreement with its backers that it should endeavor to become a representative of the Palestinians, substituting for the PLO. How then, he wondered, could it effect a rapprochement with the PLO?

'Abd-al-Rahim went on to say: The deportees have abused their issue. After all, they accept Resolution 799 and reject 242. This prompted the international community to brand them as people who view resolutions selectively.

Al-Husayni on Possible Role of PLO in Negotiations

PM1802151393 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 13-14 Feb 93 p 1

[Rula Amin report: "Faysal al-Husayni Reveals Aspects of Future Moves to AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI. PLO Considering Changing Negotiating Delegation and Escalating Violence in Retaliation for Israeli Massacres"]

[Excerpts] Jerusalem—Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations [title as published], yesterday threatened to change the rules of the game by hinting that the Palestinians would escalate their resistance to the occupation and replace the current Palestinian delegation with a PLO delegation if Israel did not abide by the rules of the current game.

Al-Husayni's remarks came in the course of his comment on the increasing Israeli repression in the occupied territory and the mounting number of Palestinians, especially children, killed by Israeli forces, as confirmed by human rights organizations which have spoken of the murder of Palestinians in cold blood.

Al-Husayni told AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI that the participation of the Palestinians in the current peace process and their acceptance of the unfair terms for joining the negotiations meant that the Israelis and the Palestinians had decided that the only option and the only way to a settlement was negotiation in accordance with international legitimacy and equality between the parties, not in accordance with the balance of power on the ground, which, of course, favors Israel. What Rabin is doing now, however, puzzles the head of the Palestinian team, who believes that Rabin is the kind of person who, once convinced of something, would pursue it regardless of the consequences.

Al-Husayni says "we thought for a while that Rabin believed that the best and most suitable solution for the Israelis was reaching a settlement with us, but his recent attitude makes us doubt that" because he is behaving like a wartime general in the battlefield with the aim of destroying the enemy facing him, and "his decisions do not reflect any political considerations."

The puzzled tone disappears from al-Husayni's words when he says that if that is Rabin's option, then we, too, have our options, and if the Israeli prime minister decided to use other cards in the game and not to be content with negotiations, "then we also would not stick only to the negotiation option. Violence breeds counterviolence, and the Palestinian side would have no alternative but to retaliate for the Israeli repression and to harm the occupation forces, but then we would not be able to negotiate. The rules of the game would then change and we, who are under the yoke of the Israeli authorities and therefore unable to give such orders, would be replaced abroad with the PLO which has the authority, ability, and freedom to implement such a line. The PLO would then be the party directly involved in the negotiations, in addition to its leadership of the struggle, the battle on the ground, as was the case at the time of the Vietnam negotiations and the Algerian negotiations."

Although they imply two threats (the first is a threat of escalation and the second a threat to bring the PLO to the negotiating table if the negotiations are to continue), these statements by al-Husayni also reflect a new approach, or let us say a new tactic, by the Palestinian leadership.

Withdrawal from the negotiations is no longer a realistic option, and everyone knows that, including the Israelis, the Americans, and the Palestinians. It would be futile to raise that option in order to make some gains because the other parties realize that it is unrealistic and just a mere threat. [passage omitted]

Visualizing what might happen, al-Husayni says "Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi and Rubenstein [Palestinian and Israeli negotiators] will face each other and the latter will pound the table with his fist and tell Haydar: This is our proposal and offer for a settlement with you. You either accept or reject it. Don't mention Resolution 242 to me. Look at the deportation issue. The whole world denounced the deportation but in the end we won and our decision remains in force." [passage omitted]

So, what is the way out of this dilemma? Withdrawal is out of the question, and using it as a threat to put pressure on the Americans and on Israel to have certain demands met is also out of the question. This time, the Palestinians will repeat their commitment to the peace process and to participation in the negotiations but, for logical reasons and as a result of Rabin's intransigence, they will request a change of negotiators, with PLO negotiators replacing the current ones and thus allow the forbidden to happen.

At present, that appears to be impossible to achieve, but it would be a successful Palestinian tactic that would throw the ball back into the U.S.-Israeli court. [passage omitted]

Stance on Talks, Settlement Outlined

TA1802173093 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 18 Feb 93 p 9

[Editorial: "Christopher's Visit and Basic Principles"]

[Text] The U.S. secretary of state will be arriving in the Middle East region today on his first official visit after assuming his post. The secretary hopes to return to Washington carrying an Arab commitment on a fixed date for the resumption of the bilateral negotiating process, which was suspended in the wake of Israel's deportation of 415 Palestinians to south Lebanon.

We realize that the secretary is fully aware of the region's realities and disputes and knows the requirements for returning to the negotiating table, but there is no harm in repeating clear and known principles in order to clarify the position and reduce misunderstanding. The U.S. Administration is the sponsor of the negotiating process. Apart from its concern for safeguarding U.S. interests in the region, we believe that it has an important role in the achievement of the desired political settlement.

We must reiterate that in order to reach this political settlement, first, the Arab side has expressed its commitment to the peace process; many initiatives have been launched by the Arab side proving its sincere intentions and readiness. Second, it should be stressed that a durable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict cannot be achieved except by addressing the core of this conflict: the Palestinian problem, so finding a just, comprehensive, and durable solution to the Palestinian problem remains the only available conduit for reaching a lasting political settlement between the Arabs in general and Israel. From this premise, a Palestinian presence at the negotiating table is very important, and it is difficult to succeed by ignoring that. Subsequently, securing the presence of the Palestinians at the negotiating table obligates the various parties, especially the U.S. Administration, to listen carefully to the Palestinian position, assess its ramifications, and place it at the top of the priority list.

The Palestinian position is clear and frank, namely, the negotiating process is not the end, but the means for reaching a political settlement, a settlement that might not be ideal, but that ensures the achievement of the Palestinian people's minimal legitimate national rights. The Palestinian side entered into the negotiating process under unfair conditions, trusting that the situation would improve not only at the negotiating table, but basically in the occupied territories. After 13 months and eight rounds of negotiations, the Palestinians found out through practical experience that the situation had deteriorated on all levels. How can one explain the fact that a center-left Israeli Government embarks on collective deportation of Palestinians and then asks them to return to the negotiating table?

The Palestinians are interested in the negotiating process, but it should be a serious process with a timetable and a defined, clear, and declared goal. For the Palestinians to believe that this might be such a process, it is necessary to implement Security Council Resolution 799. Nonadherence to international legitimacy over an issue that concerns 400 Palestinians is certain evidence of a lack of intention to adhere to the resolutions of international legitimacy concerning the Palestinian people. The U.S. Administration's obligation is to listen and rectify the course.

'Abd-Rabbuh Assails UN Decision on Deportees

PM1802131593 Rome L'UNITA in Italian 14 Feb 93 p 13

[Report on interview with Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of PLO information department, by Umberto de Giovannangeli on 13 February; place not given]

[Text] There is bitterness and surprise at a decision which resurrects the old double standard policy in the Middle East, bitterness and surprise at a decision which simply represents "the umpteenth attempt to save Israel, in contempt of all international law." The PLO's reaction to the UN Security Council's consent to the compromise proposal put forward by the Israeli Government to solve the question of the 415 Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists deported to Lebanon is decidedly negative: Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, in charge of the PLO's information department, explains why.

[De Giovannangeli] What is your assessment of the decision made last night by the UN Security Council?

['Abd-Rabbuh] It is another attempt to save Israel, in open contrast to the deliberations contained in Resolution 799, which called for the full and immediate repatriation of the 415 deportees. The Palestinian position remains unchanged: We are calling for full implementation of the UN resolution as a condition for the resumption of the peace negotiations.

[De Giovannangeli] But do you not thereby risk international isolation?

['Abd-Rabbuh] Endorsing the Israeli-American plan would mean that we would be lending legitimacy to the principle of deportation. No one can ask us to do that, especially at a time when the massacre of Palestinians by Israeli soldiers is continuing in Gaza and on the West Bank without interruption. Today our greatest concern is to convince the people in the occupied territories that there is still some point in believing in justice and international law. Certainly the Security Council's decision does not facilitate our task in the least.

[De Giovannangeli] Does that mean that the "door" of negotiation is closed forever?

['Abd-Rabbuh] Many people are hoping today that the PLO will abandon the position of dialogue. We will not make that mistake. But you cannot negotiate with a gun at your head. We asked the present Israeli Government to give proof of its alleged desire for peace by respecting international law and human rights in Gaza and the West Bank. Its answer is there for all to see: The number of Palestinians killed in the Rabin government's first six months is greater than the number for the equivalent period under the "hawk" Shamir's government. And those who are dying under Israeli fire are above all children and youths under 16, not Hamas militants. We gave Rabin proof of our willingness to seek a fair compromise over transitional autonomy for the occupied territories. In exchange we have been offered, once again, a plan which in its substance echoes the previous center-right government's plan. For our part, we are committed to restoring conditions which will allow our delegation to take its seat at the negotiating table. But for that to happen, we need immediate, concrete signs of a "new willingness" to turn over a new leaf in the Middle East, first and foremost from the Americans. That is what the Palestinian delegates will ask Secretary of State Warren Christopher: The United States must immediately stay the Israeli soldiers' hands, guaranteeing full respect for human rights in Gaza and the West Bank. Only thus will the word "dialogue" regain meaning for us Palestinians.

Arab Governments' Deportees Stance 'Regrettable'

PM1902100193 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 16 Feb 93 p 11

[Editorial: "Congratulations to Yitzhaq Rabin and No Consolation to the Arabs"]

[Text] When Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin declares that the latest UN Security Council resolution recognizing the U.S.-Israeli deal on the deportees confirmed that his government was right to deport 415 Palestinians, he is entitled to do so because not only did the Security Council break its neutrality, it also became an instrument for the approval of every U.S. request, especially if such a request is against the Arabs and in favor of Israel.

It is regrettable that the Security Council has lent legitimacy to the policy of deportation, accepted the Israeli interpretation of its resolutions, and directly encouraged Rabin's government to continue its repressive operations in the occupied territory, the latest victim of which was a Palestinian youth under 16 years of age felled by Israeli Army fire.

What is more regrettable is the attitude of the Arab governments towards this flagrant deviation by the Security Council. Most Arab states have maintained complete silence, including the states which regard the Security Council resolutions on Iraq as sacred and which supported the strikes against Iraq and the blockade against its people because it only implemented 95 percent of these resolutions.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is now packing his bags before starting his first tour of the Arab region to discuss ways of circumventing the deportees issue, isolating it from the negotiation process, and "persuading" the parties concerned to return to Washington to resume useless negotiations which only produced a big zero after eight long sessions.

The U.S. secretary's efforts will be welcomed by some Arab states. More than one Arab party has expressed willingness to resume the negotiations even if the deportees issue is not settled in accordance with Security Council Resolution 799.

There are many relevant precedents. The most significant precedent is what happened just before the Madrid conference was held 14 months ago, when the Arab states participating in the conference, with the exception of Jordan, refused to listen to the Palestinian "moaning" about the unfair terms for participation in the conference. They all agreed to go to Madrid unconditionally and, in doing so, forced the Palestinians to attend in order not to be an obstacle to peace.

It is ironic that the U.S. secretary of state will exploit his tour to ensure Iraq's commitment to the implementation of all the Security Council resolutions without delay, and he will find great support for that line in most, if not all, of the capitals he will visit.

It is difficult to see how the major UN Security Council resolutions, such as Resolution 242 calling for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territory, are going to be implemented. We Arabs have even been unable to compel Israel to repatriate 400 deportees in implementation of the latest Security Council resolution.

We know very well that the issue of the deportees is a peripheral issue, and we know that there are over 4 million Palestinian deportees who have been deportees for 43 years, but this peripheral issue is the touchstone to measure the extent of Israel's commitment to UN resolutions. On the basis of such resolutions, some of us had agreed to destroy a fraternal country on the pretext that noncompliance would be a precedent that would later apply to the Hebrew state.

OPEC Affairs

Geneva Meeting Produces Two Positive Results

LD1802110093 Algiers APS in English 1042 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Vienna 18/02/93 (APS)—In spite of the quasi-general consensus which springs from the OPEC meeting before the beginning of the Vienna meeting, the organization faced serious difficulties to finally reached an accord on the reduction of 1 million of barrels per day and then define a new ceiling of 23.582 million of barrels per day valid from March 1, to June 30. Delegations present in the Austrian capital made, during four days a lot of efforts in order to lead Kuwait to bring its production from 2 millions of barrels per day to 1.6 million of barrels per day.

Two positive points result from this meeting, ie, the reintegration of Kuwait to the system of quotas on the one hand, and the beginning of a rapprochement of points of views between Saudi Arabia and Iran, main OPEC producers, on the other hand.

On its turn, Algeria, which, in order to help for the success of the accord, "sacrificed" 32.000 barrels per day,—0.732 million of barrels per day against 0.764 in November—of its production, supports the new distribution of quotas but considers its share of November as being "more equitable and should constitute the starting point of any future distribution", according to the purposes of a member of the Algerian delegation, Ali Aissaoui.

Kuwaiti Minister Interviewed

NC1902091793 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Interview with Kuwaiti Oil Minister 'Ali al-Baghli, in Paris, by Shihatah Abu-al-Majd, in Cairo, within the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Abu-al-Majd] Today we have with us Kuwaiti Petroleum Minister 'Ali al-Baghli, who is visiting Paris after attending the OPEC meetings in Vienna. Minister, welcome to Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-Baghli] It gives me great pleasure to be with listeners to Voice of the Arabs.

[Abu-al-Majd] During the recent OPEC meetings there were differences and arguments among members over the production ceiling and the distribution of quotas. It was said that Kuwait demanded a share equal to its current production quota. What results did you achieve with your fellow ministers and did you get the quota you wanted?

[Al-Baghli] Your remarks are correct. The OPEC ministerial committee meeting was one of the toughest in OPEC's history. It took us three days to reach an agreement. Efforts were concentrated on Kuwait. It was proposed that the OPEC member states cut their production by 1 million barrels per day [bpd]. I would like to inform the dear listeners that during their last meeting in November 1992, OPEC members fixed a production ceiling of 24.582 million bpd. A temporary solution for Kuwait was proposed; at the time it was just out of a war and was rehabilitating its oil installations and reconstructing the country. To compensate Kuwait for a lengthy halt in its production, it was given an open quota. A quota of 1.5 million bpd was given as a temporary figure, which was Kuwait's total production in November. But it was given an open quota to produce as much oil as it could handle. The fall in oil prices led to a proposal to cut OPEC members' production by 1 million bpd. The tough question was Kuwait. Each member state was supposed to cut its production by a quantity proportionate with its market share, but the tough question was: Would Kuwait cut its production from the 1.5 million bpd ceiling fixed in November or from the ceiling reached in January and February 1993 under the agreement reached in November 1992 giving Kuwait permission to produce as much as it could?

[Abu-al-Majd] Did you find an answer to this question during the meetings?

[Al-Baghli] Our production in February reached 2 million bpd. We were supposed to cut it by approximately 400,000 bpd and we were given a quota of 1.6 million bpd. We were held responsible for any fall in prices that might result if no agreement was reached. With all OPEC members required to honor this agreement, violation by any member state would nullify the agreement. Because Kuwait is an important country, everybody was eager to have it join this agreement. They said that if Kuwait was outside the agreement, there would be no agreement.

[Abu-al-Majd] Do we understand from this that any violation of this agreement by any member state will find Kuwait raising its production in disregard of the OPEC agreement?

[Al-Baghli] Frankly, following insistence, pressure, and by taking care not to upset one another, we agreed. We did so because all OPEC members would have sustained grave losses in their oil revenues had the members failed to reach an agreement. Had no agreement been reached, oil prices were expected to drop by two or three dollars. So, with this concern at the back of our mind, we agreed to cut our production to 1.6 million bpd, but on condition that at the next OPEC meeting—in June—to determine production quotas from July, Kuwait will be given a quota equal to that given to countries similar in terms of production capability, quota history in OPEC, and market share. We insisted that this pledge be included in the final statement.

[Abu-al-Majd] What will be the situation for you and for OPEC should Iraq agree to UN terms and enter the world market for the production and distribution of oil?

[Al-Baghli] This is a delicate and difficult topic, which the OPEC member states must handle very seriously and responsibly. Some countries benefited from the absence of Kuwait and Iraq and they must seriously consider giving up the privileges this absence gave them and recognize the interests of all member states.

[Abu-al-Majd] Will this cut in the production ceiling, lowering the OPEC ceiling to 23.582 million bpd, bring oil prices to the level desired by OPEC members?

[Al-Baghli] We wholeheartedly hope so. We made this grave sacrifice toward that end. We hope—we are certain—this will take place, because the cut will not take place immediately, but from 1 March. We await 1 March—or around the middle of March or early April—when all the extra quantities will have been pulled out of the market.

[Abu-al-Majd] What effective measures could be taken to raise the oil price on the world market in a way that serves OPEC's interests?

[Al-Baghli] OPEC members' commitment to this agreement must be strictly monitored. The ministerial committee has decided to form a committee to monitor the members' commitment to their quotas. We also hope there will be less of a demand, so compelling industrial states to draw from their own reserves. Our problem is reserves, which are huge, because supply is great. This could have positive and profound effects on raising the price, which is our current concern.

[Abu-al-Majd] Thank you, Your Excellency.

[Al-Baghli] Thank you.

Algeria

Abdessalam in Paris To Restart Political Dialogue

LD1802124993 Algiers APS in English 1012 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Algiers, Feb 18 (APS)—The two day visit in Paris that will be paid by the head of government, Belaid Abdessalam will be the starting point of the relaunch of political dialogue between the two countries, observers in Algiers consider.

The visit of Belaid Abdessalam follows the invitation made to him by his French counterpart and transmitted by the French Foreign Minister, Roland Dumas during the visit he paid to Algiers on January 8 and 9. It also happens after a period of malaise between Algeria and France, which was born after the negative appreciation made by Paris to the stopping of the electoral process in Algeria ane which has been intentionally confused with the democratic process.

The revision of the position of French officials, who have been mistaken, it was said in Paris by hostile circles in France and Algeria, towards normal relations between Paris and Algiers was materialized by the visit of Roland Dumas to Algiers who has had the occasion to confer with the highest Algerian officials and to seize the reality of the country.

The statements he made to the press and the commitment he made on behalf of France to "accompany" Algeria in the difficult period it is living through, marked the new political readiness of France towards Algeria.

It is in fact during the visit of Dumas to Algiers that the invitation of the French prime minister to Belaid Abdessalam was transmitted and that the visit was agreed on.

This visit, it is underlined, is "eminently a political one", as this is shown by the members of the delegation who accompany the head of Algerian Government. The delegation includes Ait Chaalal, minister of state, advisor and spokesman of the government, Mrs. Meriam Belmihoub Zerdani, minister advisor to judicial and administrative affairs, 'Abd-al-'Aziz Khellef, minister delegate at the foreign minister in charge of cooperation and Maghreb affairs.

The deepening of political dialogue between Algiers and Paris, is so important, it is considered in Algiers, that the two countries assume an important role on the international scene, mainly in the Mediterranean basin, for stability, balance and security.

During his stay, Belaid Abdessalam will have talks with his French counterpart, Pierre Beregovoy, the head of the French diplomacy, Roland Dumas, and will be audienced by President Francois Mitterrand.

The head of government will also have large contacts with various political milieux, economic decision makers and representatives of the French press. He will also meet representatives of the Algerian community living in France and French friends of Algeria during the Algerian revolution.

[Algiers APS in English at 1143 GMT on 18 February in a Paris datelined report, notes the following: "The head of government, Belaid Abdessalam, arrived Thursday [18 February] to Paris where he started a two-day official visit at the invitation of French authorities. Abdessalam will have his first talks this morning with former French minister of economy, Eduard Balladur. He will later have lunch with prime minister, Pierre Beregovoy and will be received in the aftrenoon by President Francois Mitterrand at the Elysee Palace."]

Egypt

Reportage, Commentary on Christopher Visit

Arrives in Cairo; Met by Musa

NC1802170493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1626 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Feb (MENA)—U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Cairo this evening to begin his first tour of the Middle East since assuming office. During his tour the secretary of state will visit Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Israel.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa affirmed that Egypt is looking forward to consultations with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and to an exchange of views on ways to promote the peace process.

In a statement welcoming the U.S. secretary of state, 'Amr Musa said that Christopher's visit to Egypt today and tomorrow will give us the chance to exchange views on many issues of mutual interest. The foreign minister welcomed Secretary Christopher on his first visit to Egypt and on his first mission in the Middle East after assuming his post as secretary of state.

The U.S. secretary of state said it was no coincidence that U.S. President Bill Clinton decided to send him to Egypt, making Cairo the first stop on his tour. He said that Egypt has an ancient civilization that has made great contributions to modern life and that Egypt is playing a principal role in the region. He affirmed that he and President Clinton are honored that Egypt is a friend of the United States, and expressed his pleasure at visiting Cairo again. It has been 14 years since his last meeting with the late President Anwar al-Sadat in 1979. He said he hopes that his tour through the Middle East underlines the commitment of the United States and President Clinton personally to revitalize the peace process.

Christopher said President Clinton's administration believes that there is an important chance to achieve peace which must not be missed. He also affirmed that he has come to the region to demonstrate that the United States is ready to fulfill its role and to promote the roles which others can play.

He said that during his one-week visit to the area he will meet with leaders to listen to their views on the best way to advance the peace process. He noted that the issues he came to discuss are difficult and require close cooperation among the parties concerned.

Christopher said that Egypt has a leading role to play in the search for peace and in assisting the others to achieve common understanding. He noted that when Egypt signed the peace treaty with Israel it proved that commitment in diplomacy can lead to results in everyone's best interests.

Warren Christopher said he is looking forward to his meeting with President Mubarak and stated that the United States values his advice and pioneering role in handling numerous issues.

Christopher added that President Clinton has already had direct contacts with President Mubarak and Foreign Minister Musa to discuss several issues. He noted that these contacts proved the value of working as partners.

The U.S. secretary of state said he expects to have fruitful negotiations in Cairo.

Foreign Minister Musa told reporters he believes that everyone should make further efforts to return the deportees as a contribution to peace and to guarantee that the negotiations can be resumed.

Christopher pointed out that when President Clinton's administration took office on 20 January, the peace process was stagnant and no moves were being made on the deportees issue. He added: We held talks with the Israeli leaders and as a result they made an important step by agreeing to allow 100 deportees to return. As a result the United Nations announced that it approves of this measure as an important step forward and urged the concerned parties to resme negotiations.

Christopher said that this is the reason he is visiting the region—to urge all parties to resume the peace process.

Holds Talks With Musa

NC1902112693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1115 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa this afternoon held a round of talks with U.S. counterpart Warren Christopher.

Christopher arrived in Cairo yesterday evening on the first leg of his Middle East tour, his first trip since assuming his post in President Bill Clinton's administration, which took office on 20 January.

Peace Process Discussed

NC1902133893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1309 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—A Foreign Ministry source has stated that the talks held between Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher focused on developments in the peace process and ways to revive this process and achieve progress through it.

The same source added that Musa explained the Egyptian and Arab stand in this connection and stressed the need to revive the peace process and eliminate the obstacles that hamper the Middle East peace march.

The two officials also discussed regional and African issues, the situation in the Middle East and the Gulf, and bilateral ties.

The talks continued for an hour and concluded this afternoon.

Holds Talks With Mubarak

NC1902131793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1309 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak held talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the Presidential Office this afternoon.

The talks were attended by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa; Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry undersecretary and director of the President's Office for Presidential Affairs; and members of the delegation accompanying the U.S. secretary of state, which included Ambassador Edward Djerejian, assistant secretary of state for Middle East Affairs, and U.S. Ambassador in Cairo Robert Pelletreau.

Talks With Mubarak Resume

NC1902145393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1407 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher resumed their talks this afternoon at a working luncheon held by the president in honor of the U.S. secretary and his delegation.

Three-Phase Plan for Deportees' Return

NC1902123293 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Palestinian sources in Cairo have stated that Egypt proposed to the United States that Israel agree to a three-phase plan to secure the return of the deportees. Under the plan, one-third of the deportees would return now, another third before April—the date set for the resumption of the peace talks—and the remaining third in June.

The same sources added that the plan was discussed three days ago between Presidents Husni Mubarak and Yasir 'Arafat. They added that 'Arafat had proposed that the deportees be transferred to the town of Marj 'Uyun, inside the security belt, until they return home. The sources noted, however, that Israeli Prime Minister

Yitzhaq Rabin rejected the proposal. Israel, the sources added, emphasized to Washington and Cairo that the Israeli courts will review the deportees' cases and will gradually order the return of many of the deportees.

Foreign Ministry on Plan

NC1902132893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1311 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—A responsible Foreign Ministry source has stressed that Egypt is very eager that the Palestinians return to their homes irrespective of the arrangements for such a return.

The source was commenting on news agency reports that Egypt proposed to Israel a three-phase plan for returning the deportees.

Reports said that according to the plan, which was also proposed to the United States, one-third of the deportees would return immediately, another third before April, and the rest before July.

Papers View Meeting With Mubarak

NC1902070993 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 19 Feb 93

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the title "Christopher in Cairo," AL-AKHBAR's commentary notes that President Husni Mubarak will today receive U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in his first meeting with a senior official from the new U.S. Administration of President Bill Clinton. The paper believes that this meeting, which comes less than a month after the administration officially took office on 20 January, proves that the new President is honoring his promise to try to keep the Middle East peace wheel—which started to revolve during President Bush's term—turning without waiting, as is usually the custom under U.S. policy, until the Administration studies all the foreign problems to draft its own policy.

The paper refers to the crisis [deportees] facing the U.S. Administration and to the new U.S. President's promise to resolve to maintain the peace process. The paper adds that the U.S. secretary of state's tour proves that the U.S. Administration is sincere about Middle East peace.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 0605 GMT on 19 February, in its review of the Egyptian press, quotes a commentary from AL-AHRAM as saying that Christopher's tour "must encourage us to ask Washington to shoulder its responsibility in the peace process, because it launched it in the first place." The paper adds: "Such a role cannot be complete unless Israel is pressured, because it is responsible for obstructing the peace march." The paper urges the Arab states to: "Hold the necessary contacts for coordination on the Palestinian deportees and push the issue toward a solution. This would achieve two goals—finding a just settlement of the deportees issue that could end their suffering and resuming the peace process."

[AL-AHRAM reports that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has informed the Egyptian ambassador in Washington that he will hand President Mubarak a written message from President Bill Clinton in which he reiterates his eagerness to meet President Mubarak as soon as possible.]

Commentary on Tour's Significance

NC1902160993 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Commentary by Zayn al-Ja'fari: "Christopher's Tour and What Is Expected From the United States"]

[Text] Mubarak's meeting today with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher comes during the American secretary's first foreign tour. The week long visit will take Christopher to Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Israel. Mubarak's talks with Christopher will focus on current regional developments and ways to resume the peace process, which stumbled because of Israel's stand on the Palestinian deportees. They will also discuss bilateral relations and U.S. economic and military assistance to Egypt.

Upon his arrival yesterday, Christopher reiterated the U.S. commitment to revive and activate the peace process, saying that the United States believes the current significant chance to achieve peace should not be wasted. Hence, Christopher will meet with regional leaders to get acquainted with their viewpoints and determine the best approach to pushing the peace process ahead.

At the outset of the tour, which begins with Egypt, we must highlight that it has a special significance: It is the first foreign tour for the new secretary and comes less than a month after Bill Clinton's administration took over. Hence, it reflects the new administration's interest in the Middle East issue and proves incorrect certain speculation, for example that foreign policy issues—primarily the Middle East issue, the crisis in Bosnia-Hercegovina, and other international issues—would not get the same attention given them by former U.S. President George Bush and his administration. This speculation said the new U.S. Administration would dedicate most of its attention to domestic issues, primarily the economy.

It is no exaggeration to say that this tour proves that President Clinton has begun to honor his promise to keep the wheel of peace, which started during the term of his predecessor, George Bush, in motion. President Clinton has thus broken the established U.S. tradition that new administrations do not address foreign issues until they have studied them at length and developed their own policies. However, President Clinton did not want to wait. He sent his secretary of state on an exploratory tour to prepare for drawing up the U.S. role in establishing peace in the region; the peace Clinton promised to restore to the region. That is why Christopher reiterated yesterday that the United States is fully prepared to undertake its role in the process.

It seems that the new U.S. President wants to confirm beyond any doubt that his administration will follow his predecessor's footsteps. Clinton came to power when the Middle East situation was flaring up because of the deportees, a problem Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin created at a very critical time for the new U.S. President. It seems Rabin deliberately created this crisis at this particular moment, just before the resumption of the Arab-Israeli talks, to use it as a trial balloon for Clinton and his administration.

The second point worth noting is that Egypt was the first stop on Christopher's tour. If this proves anything, it indicates that the new U.S. Administration really wants to learn the Egyptian leadership's viewpoint, its assessment of the current situation and regional developments, and its vision of the coming stages of the peace process. Egypt's stand on these issues are well known. Represented in President Husni Mubarak, the Egyptian leadership takes every opportunity it can to stress the importance of keeping the wheel of peace in motion and that peace is the only available option to the parties involved. As reiterated by Christopher yesterday, Egypt plays an important and leading role in seeking peace and helping others reach understanding.

It seems that the U.S. President sent his secretary of state to the region quickly because he realized it was impossible to maintain the status quo, which poses a serious threat to the regional peace process, which, in turn, has become the only hope of reaching a comprehensive peaceful settlement that restores rights to those entitled to them. Only then will peace return to the region.

Editorial Urges U.S. Mediation Role

NC1902164593 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I in Arabic 17 Feb 93 p 2

[Editorial: "'Evaporation' of Peace: Whose Responsibility Is It?"]

[Text] Statements made yesterday by U.S. President Bill Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin are very disappointing and do not inspire hope, particularly because they were made on the eve of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the Middle East.

Clinton warned that the opportunities for regional peace might "evaporate" if the current historic opportunity is not seized. Rabin claimed that the Arabs need peace more than Israel does. Both statements are false to varying degrees and do not bode well for the success of Christopher's tour, which will include stops in several Arab countries in search of opportunities to resume the peace negotiations, stalled due to Israel's stand on the deportees.

The U.S. President might be correct to issue this warning because peace and its opportunities are so far a self-evident reality that all parties are seeking to maintain and continue. However, the situation has not yet gone beyond hopes and propaganda, which appear blatantly contradictory on the Israeli side, which is challenging all international charters and laws by refusing to comply with them. This is especially true regarding the latest Security Council resolution demanding the return of the deportees. Such a side cannot reasonably be regarded as sincere in its desire to establish a lasting peace while placing one obstacle after another before the negotiations.

Hence, Clinton's statement appears to be either lacking or precocious because the United States, as a sponsor of the peace process, must specifically point out which party is responsible for the "evaporation" of the opportunities for peace.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter emphasized this the day before yesterday when he said: "The current Middle East peace process will not lead to a lasting peace in the region if the United States does not have the desire to shoulder the responsibility of playing the role of the strong and effective mediator." Carter added: "I do not believe that merely providing or preparing a hall in which the Palestinians, Israelis, and Syrians can meet under U.S. sponsorship would really do anything."

Yes. Washington has to play the mediator's role because it launched the peace process in the first place. Such a role cannot be complete without it placing real pressure on the parties responsible for impeding the process. This means Israel. The Arabs cannot be blamed simply because they have made many concessions without any real or practical return from Israel, which is deliberately tampering with the peace process through its irresponsible practices.

To save the peace process from "evaporation," Clinton's administration has to quickly pressure Israel instead of concluding suspicious deals with it, deals that aim to prevent the implementation of international legitimacy, whose banner is being hoisted by Washington.

Rabin's statement that the Arabs need peace more than Israel does reflects a boldness against justice and is abominably arrogant. He may not have been able to go that far in his thinking without the current U.S. stand. All parties have a common need for real peace. To be more specific, it is more important for Israel than the Arabs. Israel regards peace with Egypt—which is only one Arab country—as a manifest victory. How, then, would it be if it had peace with the entire Arab nation?

Such statements regrettably reveal the logic that still prevails in the Israeli mentality. At best, it will not help improve the opportunities for peace; it could, however, might cause what Clinton called their "evaporation" if the U.S. President continues to play the role of the silent partner.

'Arafat Makes 1-Hour Stopover, Met by al-Baz

NC1902123693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1207 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat left Cairo this morning after a one-hour stopover at Cairo Airport. He was received and seen off at the airport by Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first undersecretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, and Sa'id Kamal, Palestinian ambassador in Cairo.

Seeks Solution From Christopher

NC1902131393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1232 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat has said that his visits to Egypt and Jordan have achieved positive and significant results. He added that the visits aimed at working out a unified Arab policy toward the peace process and the attempts by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to torpedo this process. The Palestinian president said that Rabin has stepped up acts of terrorism against the Palestinian people, including children and women. He noted that the Palestinian deportees issue is a time bomb which Rabin has hurled not only in the face of the Palestinians, but also in the face of the entire Arab nation.

In statements he made prior to his departure from Cairo, where he stopped for one hour today, 'Arafat said: Regrettably, Rabin is escalating the acts of killing to mass killings, collective terrorism, and mass deportations. These are war crimes which violate the Fourth Geneva Convention as well as the UN and Security Council resolutions.

'Arafat expressed hope that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will find an appropriate solution to this delicate issue, which is directly affecting the peace process in the region.

'Arafat added: I tell Rabin that patience has a limit regarding this mad escalation against children, women, and the Palestinian people. Patience also has a limit regarding the continued use of artillery and rockets against Palestinian houses, 'Arafat added.

Mubarak Comments on Domestic, Foreign Issues

NC1702204593 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] President Mubarak met at a public rally today with al-Wadi al-Jadid Governorate's popular leaders and officials. During his tour of the governorate, accompanied by the defense, information, interior, industry, and local government ministers, he also inspected various production sites in the area. He made a field visit to the Abu Turtur phosphate mines project.

The president told the rally that his policy rests on backing everyone who seeks to serve the citizens' interests and promoting national endeavor for the public good.

Mubarak announced that he does not adopt any personal stance against any citizen and accepts all criticism.

After listening to some proposals about developing the governorate, the president said with time and effort and after the major upgrading of the entire area's infrastructure, it has begun to attract new residents. He noted that all government agencies are willing to extend assistance and facilities to encourage people with excellent abilities to start new projects there.

The president also promised to visit al-Farafirah, al-Wahat al-Dakhilah, and Baris shortly.

He answered questions on several domestic and foreign issues and explained the country's economic reform policy, declaring: We are now surmounting the economic crisis. Economic reform, despite its eventual positive results, imposes on us burdens that we must tolerate but which we will overcome. Regarding demands for some new services in the governorate, he said this must be carried out within the bounds of the investment plan that distributes available funds in accordance with set priorities.

On government expenditure, the president said it is not possible to reduce expenses any further unless this is done at the expense of running the state's agencies. He declared that the People's Assembly and specialized supervisory agencies oversee government performance.

Regarding the cost of middle-income housing, the president instructed the local government minister to examine this issue with the concerned ministries and departments.

Concerning the law guaranteeing the democracy of professional associations, Mubarak said the People's Assembly passed the law only following consultations with numerous professionals. He said this law does not entail any interference with existing professional associations councils and aims to allow the majority to participate so that these councils will be truly representative.

Mubarak said it is important to maintain democratic practices and protect our democratic institutions with right, justice, and law so that they may become immune to some attempts to impose custodianship on the majority and its vital interests.

Touching on relations with Sudan, Mubarak said: We do not have any problems with Sudan. As for the issue of Hala'ib, he said that this is not the first time this issue has been raised. This issue has been raised at different stages despite the clear border between the two countries, the president said.

Mubarak pointed out that the joint technical committee will meet to discuss this issue. He said: We must differentiate between sovereignty and facilities for moving between the two countries. Egypt was and is still concerned with the Sudanese people's interests, he added.

Speaking about Egypt's relations with the international community, Mubarak said that Egypt's relations with the various countries are based on mutual respect and confidence. He said these relations are at their best. He noted that this reflects positively on Arab political and economic issues. We must guarantee the world's confidence in us by maintaining honorable stands with regard to both international and regional issues.

Touching on the issue of the Palestinian deportees and the Middle East peace talks, Mubarak explained Egypt's strategy, which is based on just peace, and Egypt's efforts to broaden this peace. He pointed out that Egypt has chosen the road of peace and adopted the peace decision. This does not emanate from the principle of strength and confidence after the October victory, but from the political maturity and cultural understanding that has enabled Egypt to adopt the appropriate decision at the appropriate time, Mubarak said.

Mubarak said that war cannot settle an issue. Objective and logical dialogue is the best method for settling issues among countries.

Mubarak then explained the changes in the world and their repercussions on Arab issues. He said that Egypt has exerted and continues to exert all efforts to help the deportees return to their homes. He said that Egypt is making the principal effort on the international level. He noted that several contacts have taken place with the Israeli prime minister, the U.S. Administration, and the PLO to work out a solution to the deportees issue. He said that this is part of Egypt's efforts toward the Middle East cause and the Palestinian issue.

On Iraq and the message Yasir 'Arafat brought from Iraq to Egypt, Mubarak said that Egypt's stance was clear at the Arab Cooperation Council. Egypt is against the policy of axes and Egypt's stand was clear during the Gulf war. Our stand stemmed from our principles, which we will never relinquish, he added.

Mubarak stressed Egypt's rejection of partitioning Iraq. Our stand is also clear when it comes to respect for international law and UN resolutions, he said.

Concluding his remarks, Mubarak said that our stand is clear on the issue of preserving Arab national security.

Opposition Says Law Undermines Democracy, Freedom

NC1702154593 Paris AFP in English 1448 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, Feb 17 (AFP)—The Egyptian Government has pushed through a law aimed at curbing the influence of Islamic fundamentalists in professional trade unions at the risk of uniting the opposition.

The leftist and liberal opposition as well as Islamic groups agree that the new law undermines democracy and freedom.

Their professional trade unions have called for emergency meetings on Friday and are considering taking court action against the bill, arguing that it violates Egypt's constitution.

Even the journalists union, led by pro-government members, has joined the chorus of protest.

The controversial law was passed Tuesday, without any consultation between unions and the parliament, which is dominated by MPs from the ruling National Democratic Party of President Husni Mubarak.

It sets a minimum turnout of 50 percent in the first round of union leadership elections and 33 percent in the second round, with the aim of limiting the chances of fundamentalists winning control.

If turnout falls short of the new limits, the new law calls for the appointment of magistrates to manage the unions for an interim six-month period, at the end of which a new vote must be held.

Low turnouts have allowed Islamic activists to take control of lawyers, doctors and engineers associations.

The opposition daily AL-WAFD on Wednesday reported the parliamentary decision under a banner headline reading: "The Nationalisation of the Unions."

AL-AHALI daily, organ of the marxist Progressive Unionist Party (PUR), charged that the law "threatens political life and the unity (of political forces) which had until now confronted (Muslim fundamentalist) terrorism."

PUR leader Khalid Muhyi-al-Din complained that the authorities failed to keep a pledge to consult with the concerned parties before parliament examined the draft.

A former officer and companion of the late president Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, Muhyi-al-Din warned: "The law will be used by minorities as a propaganda tool to complain of new restrictions on democracy."

Hilmi Nammar, an MP and leader of the businessmen's association, said the new law "is aimed at freezing de facto the unions."

Mubarak Signs New Law; Unions Plan Protest

NC1702200193 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1922 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Feb (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak signed the law on guarantees for the democracy of professional associations today.

The general and branch councils of the professional associations will hold an emergency meeting tomorrow morning at the engineers union headquarters to prepare an action plan for confronting the new law. Emergency meetings of the general assemblies of the engineers, doctors, pharmacists, and commerce unions will be held on 19 February.

The general assemblies will approve at their meetings the action plan to be issued by the emergency meeting of the unions. Unions that are due to hold elections are expected to postpone the dates for these elections for one month until the picture becomes clearer and the new law is published in the official gazette.

The unions appealed to President Mubarak yesterday to use his constitutional prerogative not to approve the draft law and return it to the People's Assembly.

The engineers, doctors, commerce, and pharmacists unions and some doctors, traders, pharmacists, and veterinarians continued their sit-ins inside their union premises to protest the enactment of the law.

Journalists Reject Law

NC1802221193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1512 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 18 Feb (MENA)—The Journalists Association Council has reiterated its rejection of the principle of imposing a supreme standard law on professional associations. The council said that the issuance of such a law, which standardizes the principles of elections in all professional associations, will undermine the work of the associations and make them unstable. This revelation came in a statement the Journalists Association Council issued today on the law on guarantees for the democracy of professional associations, which was issued by the Egyptian People's Assembly on Tuesday.

In its statement, the council said it followed the unusual rapidity with which the bill on what is called "guarantees for the democracy of the professional associations" was submitted, debated, and approved. The council noted that it issued a statement on 5 December rejecting the principle of imposing a supreme standard law on associations because it will undermine the work of the associations and make them unstable.

The statement added that professional associations in Egypt are different from each other from the standpoint of size, size in the governorates, concentration in Cairo, and the nature of working relations among members. Therefore, it added, each association must develop their own laws on the basis of democratic debate without outside interference. [passage omitted]

Minister on Brotherhood's Links to Terrorism

NC1902095193 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 17 Feb 93 p 1

[Report by Tharwat Shalabi]

[Text] Interior Minister Major General Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa has told AL-AHALI that in a few days he will announce details about an international terrorist organization in which certain Muslim Brotherhood leaders are involved. He said the defendants, most of whom have been arrested, and their roles have been identified.

The interior minister said investigations involving the defendants were conducted in secrecy lest their followers escape the country or try to get rid of incriminating evidence. He said the outcome of investigations will reveal many secrets.

Minister Denies 'Strict Security' at Airport

NC1802161793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1434 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Feb (MENA)—Interior Minister Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa has denied that strict security measures have been adopted at Cairo airport after reports that certain states have attempted to send terrorist elements to Egypt. He said that the reports about new security measures are unfounded. The interior minister said the security services are acting normally and that they have adopted routine measures to secure the land, sea, and air routes to Egypt.

In a statement to journalists following a computer training course for police officers today, the interior minister said the security authorities try not to hamper traffic at the ports or disturb the arrival and departure of passengers, while still adopting the necessary security measures.

The interior minister also denied reports about a recent attack on a tourist bus near Manfalut in Asyut. He said that two terrorists in the area opened fire on a police car, and the police returned the fire. One of the terrorists was killed and the other wounded.

The interior minister reaffirmed that the police will not condone terrorism anywhere in Egypt and will continue actions to uproot it.

U.S.-Iraq Relations Undergoing 'Decisive Test'

NC1602075893 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 13 Feb 93 p 8

["Close Up" column by Salamah Ahmad Salamah: "Good Conduct Certificate"]

[Text] The situation in the Gulf is moving in new directions that might make it necessary to reconsider many issues that became accepted facts following the Gulf war.

Despite the brouhaha that accompanied George Bush's departure from the White House and Bill Clinton's inauguration, which was a declaration that U.S. pressure on Iraq will continue, and despite the artificial stances that led to military strikes against some Iraqi positions on the pretext that Saddam had moved some missiles into the air exclusion zone, it was clear that events were simply a "hubbub," stirred up by the Iraqi regime to tell the new U.S. Administration that it was ready to present a certificate of good conduct and that it wanted to mend its fences with the West!

U.S.-Iraqi relations are apparently undergoing a decisive test during which the U.S. Administration examines the sincerity of Iraq's intentions while Saddam Husayn probes the U.S. Administration's responsiveness to his submission to U.S. wishes with the hope of establishing a new relationship. The signs are that President Clinton meant what he said in a now famous press interview: "The Iraqis can achieve a different relationship with the United States if they change their behavior."

There are many reasons behind the U.S. wish to calm the situation with Iraq, including Clinton's desire to concentrate on domestic problems, for which he can barely find enough time, surrounded as he is by more acute and urgent foreign issues such as the Palestinian deportees and the bloody war in the Balkans.

Turkish President Turgut Ozal may have been among the first to sense the new direction. He urged the U.S. Administration to ease the economic embargo and allow Iraq to export more oil to mitigate the Iraqi people's severe hardship. And the tripartite Turkish-Syrian-Iranian meeting in Damascus, which declared its opposition to a Kurdish state that would lead to Iraq's partition, strengthens the argument that efforts should be made to normalize relations with Iraq even if the goal of removing Saddam Husayn's regime remains.

The United States and the West have no inhibitions about pursuing a pragmatic relationship with Iraq. The Arab countries have a problem drawing a line between transient emotions and the Arab nation's supreme interests. This is an old Arab curse.

Minister Urges 'United' Arab-Israeli Markets

NC1402163293 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1413 GMT 14 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 14 Feb (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—Dr. Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture and land reclamation, has stated that the agricultural sector can overcome the negative aspects involved in the liberation of the economy through the application of systematic planning. He added that the government considers the conditions of agricultural producers when it determines interest rates on agricultural credit. Agricultural banks have reduced interest rates by 4 percent to encourage rural investment, he remarked.

Speaking at the opening session of the International Conference on Rural Credit, Wali pointed out that the cotton trade liberation project will be implemented in phases to protect productive farmers. He added that it has been decided to maintain the cotton cooperative market system alongside the cotton exchange to make things easier for small farmers who wish to sell their cotton crops to cooperatives and obtain the price directly. Agricultural banks will provide loans to cooperatives and the private sector to purchase the crops and compete in a manner that serves the interests of the broad class of farmers, he said. He explained that this will guarantee a minimum level of credit and protect farmers against exploitation.

Dr. Wali emphasized that the Middle East region cannot stand by with its hands tied regarding world economic blocs, the most recent of which was the united European market. He stressed the need for establishing a united Middle East market embracing the Arab states and Israel after a peace agreement has been signed, particularly because the prerequisites for this market's success—capital, manpower, and technology—are available. He emphasized that interest rates must be lower in the agricultural sector than in other areas. [passage omitted]

Reasons for Abu-Ghazalah's Resignation Noted

NC1902104693 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 17 Feb 93 p 1

[Text] AL-AHALI has learned that Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Abu-Ghazalah resigned from his post as assistant to the president because he was not assigned any specific political or administrative tasks, his post has been confined to protocol duties, and his role in the government ended when he left the Defense Ministry.

Political circles attribute the resignation to his desire to run a private company and to an agreement to work for an Arab establishment. These circles said Abu-Ghazalah had requested to resign three times, but the political leadership asked him to postpone it. These circles, following consultations with Abu-Ghazalah, rule out the possibility of giving him a new post.

Cairo To Host African Summit in June

NC1902102693 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 16 Feb 93 p 6

[Text] Egypt has agreed to host the 29th African summit in June to mark the OAU's 30th anniversary. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa signed an agreement to this effect at OAU Headquarters in Addis Ababa during a meeting with OAU Secretary General Salem Ahmad Salem. Salem praised Egypt's role in Africa and expressed appreciation for President Husni Mubarak's efforts to resolve African problems.

Libya

Editor Denies Chemical Weapons Production

LD1802182993 Tripoli JANA in English 1741 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Tripoli, Nawwar [February] 18, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY— Western news media circulated reports on German companies providing components used in the building of chemical weapons factory in the Great Jamahiriyah in accordance to the belief of Western intelligence agencies.

The media quoted the German Government spokesman as saying that the German Government instructed the German companies to stop supplying the Great Jamahiriyah with their manufactured products.

The JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY political editor had denied any intention for the Great Jamahiriyah to produce chemical weapons. This is confirmed by the acceptance of any international arrangements for which all states could be subjected to. And is also confirmed by the steps already taken towards signing the treaty for banning the production, the storage, and the use of chemical and biological weapons.

The Great Jamahiriyah, being committed to the Arab decision not to sign the mentioned agreement unless all the states in the area agreed to sign the agreement for the non-proliferation of mass destruction, reconfirms the necessity for the commitment by all countries of the world to abide by the agreement for the non-proliferation of all weapons mass destruction thus contribute effectively towards international peace and security [sentence as received].

The Great Jamahiriyah, is aware that the launch of this media campaign against it in the international news media is one of the means of psychological terrorism for which the Arab Libyan people are being subjected to. Arab Libyan people are already suffering from the enforcement of the unfair and illegal Security Council resolution and its serious impacts incurred on the people and the economy.

Source Says Country Complied With Lockerbie Resolutions

PM1802150593 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Feb 93 pp 1, 4

[Report by Randah Taqiy-al-Din: "Libya Believes It Has Fulfilled All Clauses of Resolution 731"]

[Text] Paris—An authoritative Libyan source has emphasized to AL-HAYAH that his country has implemented all the clauses of Resolution 731 urging it to cooperate with Western investigations into the blowing up of the Pan-Am plane over Lockerbie in 1981 and the French UTA plane over Niger in 1989 [dates as published]. After stressing that his country is seeking to resolve the crisis with the Western states peacefully, he said: "Every party must shoulder its responsibility if there is (really) a plan to undermine (security in) the region."

The statement made by the source, who asked to remain anonymous, came in response to what was published by AL-HAYAH the day before yesterday about Britain's hint that sanctions against Libya would be stepped up and UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali's demand that Libya comply with Security Council demands "as soon as possible." And also in response to the Libyan opposition's statements published by AL-HAYAH in the past.

The source said: "Libya has fulfilled all clauses of Security Council Resolution 731 and implemented the stipulations of its four articles, as testified by officials of the states concerned with the dispute regarding the Lockerbie and UTA cases. This includes the British prime minister (John Major) when he visited Cairo. Any other attempt to interpret this resolution is aimed at harming Libya's sovereignty. This is because Resolution 731 did not stipulate the handover of the nationals (suspected of involvement in the two incidents), but, rather, response and cooperation (with the investigations)—which Libya has done fully. As for hints at siege and escalation, especially by senior officials, this actually means eclipsing the tragedies to which Libyans are exposed daily as a result of the arbitrary measures taken against them.

"Libya has on several occasions informed Arab, regional, and international organizations—specifically and in detail—of the losses inflicted on it, especially the increase in mortality among children and the elderly, shortages of inoculations and spare parts, the harm resulting from the lack of medical equipment, and the land and sea transportation difficulties which Libyans are experiencing—matters which are unjustifiable in international law. As for those who are urging Libya to implement Resolution 731 and deviate from its stipulations, they are the same people who are ignoring the other international resolutions, which are clearer and more specific. Everyone knows that. The moves being made by groups which openly admit they receive logistical support from the United States and other quarters reveal that some quarters are not interested in maintaining international security and peace. They should have refrained from besieging a small people who are seeking prosperity on their territory."

The source added: "Those speaking on behalf of some opposition groups know that the kidnappees [al-makhtufin] file was closed after most of them returned to Libya and after they had been forced to do menial jobs abroad, where they had been exposed to humiliation. The homeland decided to embrace them in front of everyone." Concluding his statement, the authoritative Libyan source said: "Tripoli seeks to resolve all disputes peacefully. It also seeks to avoid escalation, whatever its source. But every party has to shoulder its responsibility in full if there is (really) a plan to undermine the region. The Jamahiriyah opens its borders to all its sons to embrace them without any barriers, boundaries, or gates."

AL-ZAHF AL-AKHDAR Questions International Legitimacy

LD1802182593 Tripoli JANA in English 1639 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Tripoli, Nawwar [February] 18, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The newspaper AL-ZAHF AL-AKHDAR (THE GREEN MARCH) questioned today the concept of international legitimacy, its entity and its aspects and concluded that what we are currently witnessing is not one legitimacy but more than one legitimacy. There is a lot of evidence of this. It explained that what is currently taking place in international development, once again reflects the disappointment of small nations and little states in what was once called international legitimacy, after it was proved that there were double standards for such legitimacy.

Recent reports indicated that the UN Security Council backed down from the implementation of its Resolution 799, concerning the immediate and safe return of all Palestinian deportees. Such a climb down eliminated any aspect of legitimacy called for by the Security Council. It has been proved beyond doubt that international laws are only enforceable against Arabs and weaker nations. But the Zionists, despite all their atrocities against the Arab nations and Palestinian people, are more powerful than the United Nations or the Security Council.

Evidence for that is provided by their flagrant rejection of all international resolutions - 51 in total - and now they are refusing the 52 resolution issued against them. But despite all this, neither the Security Council, nor the United Nations nor the international community can force them to comply with even one of those resolutions and do not impose sanctions on them.

This legitimacy which destroyed Iraq, even after the end of the Kuwaiti crisis and which blockaded the Arab Libyan people on a mere suspicion, not substantiated by law in a case which is non-political, is not the same legitimacy which is being applied to the terrorism and violations. The Zionists occupied the territory of another nation violate the rights of its people daily and expels them not by the hundreds but by the thousands. We have the right to question what sort of legitimacy this is.

Basic People's Congresses Send Message to al-Qadhdhafi

LD1802180693 Tripoli JANA in English 1633 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Tripoli, Nawwar [February] 18, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The masses of the Basic People's Congresses, which took part in the rally held yesterday in Tripoli to mark the 4th anniversary of the establishment of the Arab Maghreb, sent the following cable to the leader of the revolution:

O brother, leader of the great Al Fatah revolution

The masses of the Basic People's Congresses, as they mark the fourth anniversary of the establishment of the Arab Maghreb Union, as a significant step towards total Arab unity, confirm the commitment of the Arab Libyan people, which has been declared through the establishment of the people's authority in achieving total Arab unity, fondly remember, your constant instigation of the masses of the Arab nation to build up unity in order to preserve the national identity, to protect the Arab nation's sovereignty and lay the foundations for the power and progress of the Arab people.

They also fondly remember your historical role in the incessant call towards deepening the attachment of the Arab Libyan people to the national entity and deepening their attachment to their homeland and strengthening the elements of power, which the Arab nation possesses and confirm the historical contribution and of their [word indistinct] responsibility in the present world, where the survival of nations has become linked to their unity.

The masses of the Basic People's Congresses confirm, and look forward with you, to the Arab Maghreb Union becoming as you described, a champion of the poor and those who suffer from the decade of tyranny and colonisation, in order that the overwhelming majority acquires its proper share of the unified wealth of the new Arab Maghreb Union.

The masses, which march towards the build up of a new era want the Arab Maghreb Union to become a safe haven for every national free from fear, where they will enjoy their freedom and practise the authority in such a way that the summit of the pyramid becomes its base and vice versa. This is the vision for the Jamahari practise of authority.

O great leader,

Let us march together, hand in hand, on the road of unity to make the Arab Maghreb one country, with one entity, one currency and one passport.

May God save you and preserve you as a leader, instructor and teacher for the masses of the Arab nation, so that they will realise their unity from the ocean to the Gulf.

Air Force Defector Joins Opposition, Cites Motives

PM1802162393 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Feb 93 p 4

[Report by 'Ali al-Ruzz: "Libyan Pilot Who Defected to Greece Announces His Joining of 'Salvation Front'"]

[Excerpts] London—The Libyan pilot who defected with his MiG-23 aircraft to Greece 8 July 1992 has announced that he has joined the Libyan National Salvation Front (the main opposition faction). He described his joining of the "Libyan National Army" (the Front's military arm) as "a sacrosanct duty toward my homeland and people and a bridge to a better life inside Libya."

AL-HAYAH met Air Force Captain Jamal Salih 'Umar in a European capital, in which he took refuge after leaving Greece. In his first statement he spoke about his defection, its motives, conditions in Libya, and his role in the opposition. [passage omitted]

He points out that his motives for defecting were "the sense of national responsibility after the deterioration of conditions inside Libya, and out of my belief that I should play my role as an Armed Forces officer and embark on a step that draws the Libyan people's attention to the seriousness of the situation and the deterioration which is continuing in a horrific way. This is because the Libyan people are in a state of loss, and the ruling class is irresponsible and has no political experience."

He asserted that the military establishment in general "is the last one to feel these conditions, because of its endurance on the one hand and its aloofness from politics on the other. But conditions in Libya have deteriorated so badly that they have reached the tip of the pyramid that is the military establishment. The regime does not trust the officers and disarms them. And if it allows them to retain their personal firearms, it confiscates their ammunition. They now feel that they are there to protect a situation, not the homeland."

He pointed to "the extensive powers which the revolutionary committees enjoy inside the military barracks; the concentration of power in the hands of the intelligence services and security men; the large number of cases of repression, execution, and arrest; and the lack of freedoms, parties, and pluralism.... These and other matters prompted me to decide to defect—a prevalent feeling among most officers and people."

He emphasized that the Libyans "are going through a very difficult mental state. And if a democratic referendum is conducted under UN supervision and Arab and international observation, they will choose Dr. Muhammad al-Muqaryif, secretary general of the Libyan National Salvation Front, as their president. Because he is a very important man for the Libyans, who—whenever the pressures increase—yearn to hear the Front's and his positions."

He also said that Colonel Khalifah Haftar (commander of the Libyan National Army) "makes a great impression among the Armed Forces, as he is known for his military competence. The Libyans expected him to enter [Libya] from Chad at the head of the opposition army's forces. A state of alert was declared whenever such reports increased. But we were agreed among ourselves that the Armed Forces' weapons would not be directed at the Front or the National Army, even if the regime forced them to do so. Despite my very limited political experience, it was the issue concerning the army in Chad which prompted the regime to conclude a truce and make up with Ndjamena, as though all those wars had not taken place and those victims had not fallen." [passage omitted]

He concluded by saying: "I hope the efforts of all Libyans outside and inside the country will crystallize in one direction, because there is one enemy. And I hope democracy will prevail in my country and the law be above everyone without exception—which can only be achieved through cooperation among politicians, the military, and the people both inside and outside the country."

Morocco

Premier Meets With Spanish, Algerian Ministers

LD1702141093 Rabat MAP in English 1248 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Rabat, Feb 17 (MAP)—Premier Karim Lamrani met here Tuesday [16 February] Algerian Energy Minister Hacene Mefti, Spanish Industry, Trade and Tourism Minister Claudio Aranzadi, and Driss Alaoui M'daghri, [Moroccan] minister of energy and mining, who reported on progress in the Maghreb-Europe gas-pipeline project.

Ministers voiced satisfaction at the pace of work and renewed their governments' readiness to go ahead with the undertaking which ushers in a new era of cooperation in the area.

Lamrani thanked participants for earnest action and said that beyond economic reasons, the projects has come to stand for a symbol of close cooperation between the Maghreb and Europe and friendship between the three countries.

The ministers met earlier in Rabat to assess results obtained so far. They agreed work was proceeding normally according to plans which slate operation for October 1995. They covered energetic, economic, financial and political aspects before meeting the press to stress the importance of the regional project meant to take Algerian gas to Europe via Morocco and highlight work completed so far.

Follow-up meetings like the one hosted Tuesday by the Moroccan capital already convened in Madrid (Apr—1991), Brussels (may—1991), Rabat (dec—1991), and Hassi Rmel in Algeria (June—1992).

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Concludes Visit, Departs

LD1602144093 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 16 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister of Kuwait, left Rabat this morning at the end of a visit to Morocco during which he delivered a message to His

Majesty King Hassan II, may God give him victory, from the amir of the State of Kuwait, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Ugandan President Museveni Visits 17-18 Feb

Says Garang Agreed To Negotiate

EA1702155693 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has announced that rebel John Garang has agreed to negotiate with the Sudanese Government. He said this in a press statement on arrival in Khartoum this morning at the invitation of Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and of the Council of Ministers. President Museveni was met at Khartoum Airport by Lt. Gen. al-Bashir, members of the RCC and of the Council of Ministers, the chief justice, ambassadors accredited to Khartoum, and senior armed forces officers. We will give more details later in the bulletin.

[Later in the same newscast, Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network carries President Museveni arrival statement in English with superimposed Arabic translation:

["I have come to Sudan at the invitation of Lt. Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the RCC and of the Council of Ministers. We have made great efforts in mediating between the Sudanese Government and the rebel movement, which in the past was uninterested but now has agreed to negotiate with the Sudanese Government. I hope Sudan's problems, especially the war in the south, can be solved through dialogue. The fighting in the south of the country has been very prolonged. The (?time has come to stop the war).

["Regarding Sudanese-Ugandan relations: We have no problem with Sudan, except the war in the south, which stops trade, but otherwise we have no problem with the Sudan. Our relationship is good."]

Al-Bashir on Visits by Museveni, Pope

EA1702220693 Khartoum SUNA in English 1755 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Khartoum 17 Feb (SUNA)—Chairman of the RCC [Revolution Command Council] General 'Umar al-Bashir has welcomed Museveni's visit to Sudan, asserting that Museveni's visit came in the framework of promoting relations between Sudan and Uganda.

President Museveni of Uganda arrived here on Wednesday [17 February] on a two-day visit.

Speaking in his regular meeting with the national media executives on Wednesday, Gen. al-Bashir expressed hope that [the] Ugandan president's visit to Sudan would boost relations between the two sisterly countries. He said that Sudan has been seeking to develop its relations with the neighboring countries because their stability will strengthen Sudan's stability, adding that Sudan encourages cooperation with these countries. He affirmed that Sudan would not allow [the launching [of] hostile actions against its neighboring countries from its lands.

Meanwhile, the RCC chairman said that [the] pope's visit to Sudan was a chance to get himself acquainted with the situation in the country, as well as to explain Sudan's view concerning the renewed war in southern Sudan. Gen. al-Bashir has called on the pope to exert efforts to defend Muslims in Bosnia-Hercegovina and [towards] peace efforts in [the] Middle East. [passage omitted]

Closing Session Held

EA1802132093 Khartoum SUNA in English 1020 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Khartoum, 18 Feb (SUNA)—Chairman of the Revolution Command Council (RCC) Gen 'Umar al-Bashir and the Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni held a closing session at the Friendship Hall here Wednesday evening [17 February]. The two presidents have discussed bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest. Meanwhile the RCC chairman has thanked President Museveni on his visit to Sudan, pointing to the historic relations between the two countries.

President Museveni said that the economic development in the area could be achieved by joining efforts.

The Sudanese side that took part in the session included the interior minister, Brig 'Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn, the acting foreign minister 'Abdallah Deng Nhial, minister of economic planning and investment and the government's spokesman to peace talks, Dr 'Ali al-Hajj, state minister at the Presidency, Dr Ghazi Salah al-Din, and Sudan's ambassador to Uganda.

On the other hand the RCC chairman gave a dinner banquet at the Friendship Hall in honour of the Ugandan president, which was attended by speaker of the Transitional National Assembly, Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, a number of RCC members and ministers and ambassadors accredited to the Sudan.

Al-Bashir on Relations With Uganda

EA1802194293 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council (RCC] and the Council of Ministers, has affirmed that good neighborly relations with all the neighboring states is one of the revolution's policies in the field of foreign relations, considering that the development of these relations brings about the stability of the region and solves its problems, especially since the region has suffered from problems and differences. He said: We are keen to develop our relations with Uganda and to remove obstacles which may affect relations between the two countries.

This came in his reply to a question on relations between the two countries posed to him by the UGANDAN NEWS AGENCY at the news conference held this morning at the Friendship Hall in Khartoum by the Ugandan president, Yoweri Museveni, at the end of his visit to the country. Lt. Gen al-Bashir added that the principle of our relations shall be based on continued frankness in addressing one another, exchanging information between the two sides, and confirming that the information is correct, because there are some local, regional and international forces endeavoring to create continuing tension and to cause problems between the two countries through false information so that the rebel movement benefits and achieves its objectives.

His excellency described relations with Uganda as developing, and said that there was complete understanding on the issues which had been discussed during the visit, in addition to the agreement on joint efforts in developing the region to achieve stability.

His excellency said we are confident that the Ugandan people shall march along the road of progress and development under the leadership of Museveni and that the revolution will work towards achieving development and peace, since these are joint objectives in the interest of the two peoples.

For his part, the Ugandan president, Yoweri Museveni, affirmed that Uganda endeavored to establish peace in the country through negotiation. He declared that rebel John Garang had agreed to hold talks with the government and would be arriving on 19 February in Kampala for this purpose according to the agreement which was concluded between them. He clarified that there were a number of questions concerning this matter, on which an agreement had been concluded with the Sudanese Government during his visit.

Replying to a question on the refugee situation in the two countries, he said there was no problem in this regard, and that voluntary repatriation was guaranteed for them, especially after the situation in the south of Sudan stabilized and guaranteed the return to Uganda.

Concerning fields of cooperation, the Ugandan president said that we were trying to introduce several areas in this regard to increase the size of commercial markets and benefits from raw materials and the manpower to achieve our people's development, in addition to selling products to different states in the continent to achieve prosperity for their peoples. [passage omitted]

Museveni Comments, Departs

EA1802190693 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1050 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Khartoum, 18 Feb (SUNA)—Ugandan president, Yoweri Museveni, has declared that rebel John Garang will be arriving in Uganda on 19 February. This visit comes within the framework of the mediation [effort] which is being made by his excellency, and the Kenyan president, Daniel arap Moi, to convene a round of talks between the Sudanese Government and the rebel movement.

President Museveni pointed out in the news conference he held today at the end of his two-day visit to the Sudan that a round of talks may be held soon in Uganda or Kenya. The Ugandan president said [words indistinct] with results, pointing out that the war had affected the Sudan and crippled the trade between the Sudan and Uganda.

The Ugandan president left Khartoum this afternoon for (?his country). He was seen off by Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council and the Council of Ministers, a number of ministers, and other very important people.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Congratulates Abu-Salih

NC1502205693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1640 GMT 15 Feb 93

[Text] Khartoum, 15 Feb (MENA)—Sudanese Foreign Minister Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih today received a congratulatory cable from Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa on his recent appointment.

The cable reiterated the deep-rooted ties of cooperation between Egypt and Sudan in various fields. Musa wished the Sudanese minister success in his new post.

The Sudanese minister is expected to leave Khartoum today on his way to Addis Ababa to attend the African foreign ministers' meeting.

Tunisia

Ukrainian Foreign Ministry Delegation Visits

LD1802194593 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] A Ukrainian delegation is currently on official visit to Tunisia. The delegation is headed by the Ukrainian First Deputy Foreign Minister Mykola Makarevych. Mr. Habib Ben Yahya today held talks with the Ukrainian officials dealing with the prospects of cooperation between Tunisia and Ukraine in the political, economic, commercial, and technical fields.

The two countries reached an agreement providing for the abolition of visa requirements for businessmen and diplomatic and other official missions. The protocol also provides for periodic political consultations between the Tunisian and the Ukrainian foreign ministries. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Amir Receives Message From Libya's al-Qadhdhafi

LD1602184193 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1803 GMT 16 Feb 93

[Text] Kuwait, 16 Feb—Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al- Sabah today received a message from Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, the contents of which have not been disclosed.

The message was conveyed by 'Umar al- Muntasir, Libyan secretary of the Genral People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation, currently on a visit to Kuwait, when he was received by the amir this evening. Al-Muntasir arrived in Kuwait earlier today from Riyadh in the framework of a tour of the region.

Prime Minister Receives Libyan, Italian Ministers

LD1702120293 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Excerpt] At 1045 this morning, His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al- Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister, received 'Umar al-Muntasir, secretary of the General People's Committee of the Libyan People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation, at his office in Bayan Palace.

The meeting was attended by Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Shaykh Nasir Muhammad Al-Ahmad, minister of amir's affairs; and Husni Al-Mudir, the Libyan ambassador in Kuwait.

At 1130 his highness the heir apparent and prime minister also received Italian Defense Minister Salvo Ando and the delegation accompanying him. [passage omitted]

Information Minister on Role of Press, Other Topics

PM1802110193 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 10-16 Feb 93 pp 30-32

[Interview with Information Minister Shaykh Sa'ud Nasir al-Sabah by Nura Fakhuri in Kuwait; date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Fakhuri] The newspaper AL-QABAS published military information, so the defense minister requested that it stand trial. What is the extent of flexibility between the press and the authorities in Kuwait?

[Al-Sabah] The relationship with the Kuwaiti press must be based on complete understanding. When there is press freedom, you must provide the press with the information it needs. This method satisfies both the press and the government. Pressures and the concealment of information cause confusion and prompt the press to look for the truth, which will emerge in the end. Matters are open now. In the past there was a kind of misunderstanding with the government. I hope it will not be repeated and we avoid it in the future. There is a journalistic trust which must be respected. There are boundaries which must be respected, because the country's security and stability should be a matter of conscience for every editor and chief editor. The press' task is not to hunt down the government, nor is the government's task to hunt down the press. What is most important is that there be self-regulation and that reports harmful to Kuwait's security not be published.

[Fakhuri] A chief editor received death threats because he published unwelcome reports about the investment and public funds issue. What is your opinion of the Kuwaiti Government's position?

[Al-Sabah] Like many other people, I read the report in the press. I do not believe there is any fear. Anyone can pick up a telephone and make threats. What we are primarily interested in is safeguarding press security in Kuwait. I do not believe that we are a country which resorts to settling scores or to such threats.

[Fakhuri] But arms are still widespread in Kuwait, and the Interior Ministry is still demanding that people hand them over to it. True, security is available, but there is still concern. So what is your role in protecting the press?

[Al-Sabah] The press is protected, and no attempt to attack any journalist has taken place here since the liberation. The press writes freely and there is no reason for concern. Kuwait experienced a major ordeal, and the quantities of arms are huge and difficult to collect in a short period. Many people prefer to keep them to protect their homes. There are other groups which store these arms for other objectives. The Interior Ministry's task in this connection is difficult, especially if it has to enter and search houses—which could represent a violation of the constitution and the laws. Besides, arms have existed in Kuwait for some time. Acquisition of arms used to be part of the Kuwaitis' life. The aim was to protect or decorate the house. But the circumstances have changed now, and citizens should now cooperate with the Interior Ministry to ensure that these arms are not used by offenders and by groups which could use them for other objectives. We need more time, and there is no reason for concern.

[Fakhuri] Talk about concern moves us to another kind of concern. Jasim al-Sa'dun told AL-MAJALLAH previously that in three years the Kuwaiti Government will not be able to pay the salaries of its employees. This statement raised many questions.

[Al-Sabah] I read that interview and felt that it contained a pessimistic view of Kuwait's economic future. But in an interview with Jasim al-Sa'dun in the "Issues and Answers" program I found him more optimistic. Kuwait lost half of its reserves as a result of the occupation and the liberation war; we do not disagree on this. We have half of our reserves. And current oil prices are low. We are trying to maintain our production quota. We are also trying to reduce our government spending and postpone projects which can be postponed. The government has had a budget deficit over the past two years, and we had to choose between liquidating [tasyyil] investment to pay this deficit or borrowing. We found that borrowing was more economical than liquidating investment. It is not shameful for the State of Kuwait to borrow money. It is like any other state. For all these reasons, people formed the impression that the Kuwaiti Government is bankrupt and that the budget deficit is huge and will continue for years to come... But this is untrue. The profit we make from investment abroad is a major and good source of income and the revenues from it exceed the interest payments on the loans. We have to restore the country's previous economic structure. [passage omitted]

[Fakhuri] It is still in Kuwaiti citizens' minds that, despite the embargo and surveillance measures, 400 Iraqi soldiers dressed in civilian clothes managed to reach Umm Qasr and the Kuwaiti border...

[Al-Sabah] That is not our responsibility...

[Fakhuri] Perhaps, but Kuwaiti citizens are worried about what happened.

[Al-Sabah] The soldiers did not reach the border. The Iraqis entered the area which is under UN control. They did not enter the area which is under our protection or control. When they tried to do so a few days earlier they were repelled. We drew the attention of the United Nations to that, as its task in that area was just to record violations. The view now is that an armed peace-keeping force should be sent to the region. [passage omitted]

Oman

Foreign Affairs Official Views Regional Issues

PM1802113593 Muscat 'UMAN in Arabic 11 Feb 93 p 5

[Interview with Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, by Hamud Bin-Salim al-Siyabi; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Siyabi] Some people believe that the personal factor played a major role in the Gulf crisis between Saddam and Bush. But despite the arrival of new faces in the U.S. Administration we still hear the language of rigidity and intransigence. How do you think the United States will handle the crisis in the future?

[Bin-'Alawi] It is very natural for any new head of state to stress at first that he will follow the policy of his predecessor. Nevertheless, gradual change is bound to take place. And obviously we expect gradual change from the new administration. This gradual change depends on the positions Iraq adopts toward the new administration. However, I do not believe that the basic aims are subject to change in either the former or the present administration. Nor do I believe that U.S. positions on UN resolutions will be subject to any change, especially with regard to the resolutions concerning mass destruction weapons. These positions will not change... even though they are not as severe as they were.

[Al-Siyabi] What about your view of the future Arab handling of the crisis?

[Bin-'Alawi] Let us talk about the Kuwaiti-Iraqi aspect of the crisis. The dispute between the two sides will continue for a long time. Past historical examples are numerous. If we look at past issues like the German-German dispute and the repercussions of the Korean war, we will find that the crises continued for a long time.

But the advantage in the Iraqi-Kuwaiti dispute is that it falls in the Arab framework, so it will perhaps not be as severe as the the dispute between the two Koreas or the two Germanies... or any other similar examples in history.

At any rate, there are demands that favorable conditions be brought about to prepare the region for a phase of stability. [passage omitted]

[Al-Siyabi] The Iraqi occupation of Kuwait divided the Arab position into two trenches. Do reconciliation calls represent a third trench, and what are their chances of success?

[Bin-'Alawi] Interpretations differ from one state to another. And certainly the situation will in the end return to its previous, pre-war status. When I say pre-war status I mean not the restoration of relations, but the restoration of a state of stability. I do not believe that, after a war like the Gulf war, relations have to return to their previous status. However, some accord is bound to occur among the parties, with bilateral relations remaining as they stand.

[Al-Siyabi] Some people believe that the Gulf states have not learned or understood the lessons of the crisis. The unified Gulf army plan represents a conscious reading of the complications of the crisis. Despite this, hesitation and excuses still dominate Gulf decisionmaking. What is your opinion?

[Bin-'Alawi] The strategic plan prepared by the committee formed under His Majesty Sultan Qabus took account of all the aspects which led to the breakout of the war. But in the future interpretations could differ from one state to another. These states have different convictions, and the nature of each state's relations with the international community is different. Domestic factors play a role in formulating the future view. Certainly there is no longer an urgent need to exert pressure to move forward. [sentence as published] The situation in the Gulf was a volcano, and the volcano has now subsided. People are currently experiencing the bubbles of the volcano. But as the region is a volcanic region, it is very possible that this volcano could erupt once again. Thus we believe that what was proposed is in the correct context, because of what could happen in the future. And I say once again that these interpretations vary; they could be right and they could be wrong. [passage omitted]

[Al-Siyabi] The deportees crisis has shaken UN credibility. The United Nations uses all its tools and instruments against every state except Israel, which enjoys special immunity and treatment—which has caused people to talk again about the double standards applied in the crisis with Iraq. What is your opinion?

[Bin-'Alawi] We have to accept the reality of the age. Double standards are one of the realities of the age and cannot be ignored. I believe that the Arab states should learn to benefit from the double standards issue. And we should also encourage others to use double standards in the Arabs' favor.

What is important is that the double standards issue will continue, because ideals do not exist in our age. So double standards exist. Everyone knows that the United States has commitments toward Israel, and it is very natural for it to do its utmost to spare Israel whatever exposes it to difficulties. We know that U.S. commitments toward the Arabs are much less than its commitments toward Israel. So we should not be surprised. Instead, we should try to exert as much pressure as we can in order to influence both the U.S. and Israeli position. [passage omitted]

Qatar

Italy's Ando Promotes Italian Presence in Gulf

AU1702094693 Rome ANSA in English 0829 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] (ANSA) Doha, Qatar, February 16—Defense Minister Salvo Ando today visited Qatar during a tour, the third by a top Italian official in two months, of Persian Gulf states and intended to show Italy's "extraordinary interest" in this oil-rich region.

Arriving here from a two-day visit to the United Arab Emirates, Ando said he believed it was very important to show Italy's "presence" in a region he defined as "inevitably influenced by permanent political instability" but with extraordinary financial means.

Most of all, he said, it is important to support Italian companies wanting to invest here, especially defense contractors. For this reason, Ando yesterday made the first visit ever by an Italian defense minister to the Abu Dhabi international arms exposition.

The Gulf states are in a "paradoxical" situation and are having "a strange reaction" to events ever since the end of the Iraq-Iran war and the Gulf war, Ando told reporters. They do not support Iraq but they fear that Iran will become too (?powerful) and (?international) stability will be upset if Iraq is split up into three parts.

"The international community needs to pay great attention and with this visit, we want to show the extraordinary interest Italy has in being present in this region."

Ando today was received by the emir, Sheikh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, and this evening will go to Oman.

Treasury Minister Piero Barucci visited the Gulf states at the beginning of the year, to publicize Italy's privatization plans. Foreign undersecretary Giuseppe Giacovazzo did the same a few weeks ago to boost bilateral cooperation.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Meets With Amir

BK1602165893 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 16 Feb 93

[Text] Qatar has expressed its readiness to cooperate fully in the development efforts of Bangladesh. The assurance came when Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman met the amir of Qatar, Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, yesterday and handed over a letter to him from Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. During the meeting, the amir of Qatar said [words indistinct] the welfare and development of Bangladesh. He also accepted the invitation of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia to visit Bangladesh. Mr. Mustafizur Rahman later held an official meeting with his Qatari counterpart, Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabbur Al Thani.

Saudi Arabia

Official Views Cooperation With Italy, Other Issues

LD1802235993 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2215 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Hafr al-Batin, 18 Feb (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud, second deputy prime minister and general inspector, today held a news conference in Hafr al-Batin on the occasion of the signing of a framework cooperation agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Italy in the military, industrial, and technical research fields.

His royal highness explained in his answers to the press that the Gulf region was currently enjoying security stability as opposed to the picture painted by Western newspapers, which were saying that the situation in the Gulf was explosive. He pointed out that the Italian press was more moderate than others.

On the war against Bosnian Muslims and the extent of the Kingdom's assistance to them, in terms of military or other aid, his highness said: "The Kingdom is providing humanitarian assistance through a high commission chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud, interior minister".

As for military assistance, his highness stressed that the Kingdom was committed to UN Security Council resolutions, although we are not at the present time satisfied with the stances of the great powers vis-a-vis the immoral farces. His royal highness said: "We do not want the great powers or peace-loving nations to lose credibility in the eyes of the world by losing faith in the UN Security Council." He stressed that "we in the Kingdom are no more zealous about Muslims than we are about mankind when his rights have been violated."

Concerning Saudi-Italian relations, his highness the second deputy prime minister said: "The two countries have long-standing economic and military relations, and we are working with his excellency the Italian defense minister, who is currently visiting the Kingdom, under the directives of the leaders of both countries to promote and develop those relations. The meetings were culminated by our signing of an agreement on understanding and a framework agreement for Saudi-Italian cooperation last night."

His highness noted that an agreement was reached between the two countries on the exchange of delegations to examine the extent of cooperation and promote it. Replying to a question about the defense policy of the Kingdom after Kuwait's war of liberation, His Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-Aziz said: "The Kingdom's defense policy has been connected to a military development plan for 10 years, and no doubt the Kuwaiti war of liberation has prompted us to develop this plan and to speed it up not because there are existing dangers now but to prevent the occurrence of other dangers."

Regarding the assessment of Italy's role during the war to liberate Kuwait, his highness made it clear that there was fruitful cooperation, be it within the resolutions of the UN Security Council or the coalition, to assert international legitimacy. Concerning the increase in armaments in the region after Kuwait's war of liberation, his highness said: "Every human always looks to his private interests and to protect himself." His highness added: "We are monitoring the implementation of the Security Council resolutions, be it in the Gulf region or in other regions." His highness also said: "When the Security Council resolutions are implemented honestly and meticulously, the demand for massive armament, I believe, will decline, and funds will be spent on the development of man and his comfort."

His highness also pointed out that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that not only certain countries should adhere to the Security Council resolutions but that all existing Security Council resolutions must be implemented whether they related to the Gulf region, Israel, Bosnia-Hercegovina, or anywhere else in the world where resolutions have been passed to protect human rights and bring about peace instead of war. His highness expressed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's appreciations for the EC, and Italy in particular, for their commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolutions.

Replying to a question on the view expressed by a number of U.S. allies that Iran is a serious threat at the moment to the region's stability and peace, His Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz said: "Iran is our neighbor; it is a Muslim country. Our hope is that Iran will take practical steps to deny such rumors." Regarding the improvement of relations between Iraq and the rest of the international community, his highness said we think the Iraqi people ought to contribute to the removal of causes which led to the current situation in Iraq; however, the matter concerns the Iraqi people alone, he added. The news conference was attended by the press delegation accompanying the Italian defense minister.

Further on Italian Accord

AU1902124293 Rome ANSA in English 1014 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] (ANSA) Riyadh, February 18—Italy and Saudi Arabia today agreed to cooperate in the area of defense, especially with regard to joint teams and training and the use of advanced technologies, Italian Defense Minister Salvo Ando reported here today.

Ando, who arrived here Wednesday from Kuwait, was today received by Deputy Premier and Defense Minister Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud.

Italy has steadfastly pursued efforts aimed at maintaining stability in the region, and Ando explained that the memorandum of understanding signed by the two sides today, was aimed at opening a new stage in cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Italy, two countries which already enjoy intense economic relations.

It was also agreed today that a joint panel of experts would soon meet and that there would be an exchange of delegations in the near future.

The memorandum inked today will also allow for a concrete study of how Italian technology can best contribute to Saudi defense needs.

Foreign Minister Receives Bangladeshi Counterpart

LD1602211593 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 16 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal al Sa'ud met this morning in his office with His Excellency Mustafizur Rahman, foreign affairs minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

During the meeting, the means for developing bilateral relations existing between the two fraternal countries were discussed, and international and regional political issues of common concern were reviewed. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Iran Said Interested in New Chinese Anti-Ship Missile

NC1802142693 Paris AFP in English 1209 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb 18 (AFP) - Military delegates from Iran and other Gulf states have expressed interest in an advanced sea- skimming missile China displayed at an arms show here, a Chinese official said Thursday.

The C-802 multi-purpose anti-ship missile has a range of 120 kilometres (75 miles) compared with 110 kilometres (69 miles) for the U.S. Harpoon missile, said Jeng Deyun [name as received], head of the Chinese delegation to the show.

It is the first time the missile, produced three years ago, has been displayed in the Middle East. It has been put into service in China but has not been sold to any other country.

The six-metre missile can be deployed on warships, coastal bases and aircraft for attacking ships, including destroyers, escort vessels, landing craft and other targets, the official said.

China is a newcomer to the Gulf Arab arms market but it was the main supplier of Silkworm missiles to Iran during its 1980-1988 war with Iraq. Several ships were reported hit by Silkworms during the conflict.

The Chinese pavilion also includes Silkworms, another anti-ship missile C-801 and rocket launchers, but it is dwarfed by such exhibitors as France, Britain, the United States, Russia and South Africa.

RSA Deputy Minister To Discuss Lifting of Arms Embargo

MB1502103193 Johannesburg Radio South Africa Network in English 0500 GMT 15 Feb 93

[Text] Deputy Defense Minister Wynand Breytenbach is to discuss the possible lifting of the arms embargo against South Africa with several of his counterparts at the international defense exhibition in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates this week. Mr. Breytenbach is attending the exhibition with the Defense Force chief, General Kat Liebenberg, and the chairman of Armscor [Armaments Corporation of South Africa], Mr. Johan Moolman.

Interviewed at the exhibition, Mr. Breytenbach said there was reason to believe that the embargo would be lifted soon and that he saw it as his duty to try to speed up the process. At least 30 ministers of defense have been invited to the exhibition.

On display are G-5 and G-6 howitzers, and the Rooivalk [Red Falcon] helicopter. Armscor has confirmed that it's looking for a partner or partners to complete the expensive Rooivalk project.

Trade Sanctions Lifted

MB1602143893 Johannesburg Radio South Africa Network in English 1100 GMT 16 Feb 93

[Text] The emirate of Dubayy has lifted trade sanctions against South Africa. Banks in the emirate have been told that they may inform importers and exporters that they can do business with South Africa, ending a formal ban imposed on the Republic in protest against its apartheid policies.

The director of the Dubayy branch of the Israel Boycott Office which also handled South African sanctions, Mr. (Hikmat Sa'id Jarbur), said the decision to lift sanctions had been taken by the United Arab Emirate's cabinet last month, but that the announcement had been delayed until this week.

South Africa is currently exhibiting weapons at the first international defense exhibition which opened in Abu Dhabi on Sunday [14 February].

Yemen

Salih on Elections, Democracy, Ties With Saudi Arabia

JN1802213193 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 18 Feb 93

["Text" of interview with Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, by unidentified Radio Monte Carlo reporter; place and date not given—recorded; carried within the "News Follow-Up" feature]

[Excerpts] [Reporter] Mr. President, wars and political, religious, and tribal frictions prevail throughout our world. Human barbarism has reached the point of surpassing all past human atrocities. Within this atmosphere comes Yemen's unity experience. We greatly fear for this historic step. Is our fear justified, and is there anything to substantiate it?

[Salih] First of all, no one should have fears about Yemeni unity and the democratic experience. Yemeni unity is protected by God, and by the broad popular support it enjoys. Democracy is the only option and there is no going back on it. I believe your question was motivated by the hostile media campaign. There certainly is a hostile media campaign from outside the Yemeni homeland, specifically by some of the brothers. We had hoped that they would not be the ones to attack Yemen. Such an attack was expected from other parties. Friendly countries sympathize with Yemen's experiment in restoring unity and proceeding along the road to democracy. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Mr. President, a sensitive question but one of great importance: Given that many are skeptical that elections will take place on the scheduled date, can you affirm that 27 April will really be the day when legislative elections will take place and that this will be a date for the history books?

[Salih] I categorically affirm that there will be no change. There is no room for a change, delay, or postponement of the elections set for 27 April, the day the people's representatives will be elected. There is no going back on this date, and no one has the right to decide to postpone these elections. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] The past two years have witnessed acts of violence, some of which could be described as politically motivated, others are of a tribal nature, while some are of a religious nature [words indistinct]. To what extent do these manifestations pose a threat to unity and democracy in Yemen, and are these only isolated manifestations; do they really affect the march of unity and development in the country?

[Salih] According to the scheme and to what some mercenaries and forces—which are the agents of other regimes—have said, they have been ready to foil Yemeni unity for the past two years. The acts of violence are part of this scheme. We have firm proof about the elements which carried out acts of violence, those who are behind them, and those who financed them. Many of these elements are under investigation while others are still at large. This is part of the greater scheme to destabilize the country. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Mr. President, I would like to move on now to the issue of Yemen's neighbors, the issue of the brothers, and the dialogue that was recently held. I believe this is a sensitive issue and negatively or positively affects the course of unity. First, we recently noticed that there is an emphasis on relations through visits that were exchanged between officials from the Kingdom [of Saudi Arabia] and Yemen. We hope that there will be an agreement to enhance these relations and friendship? Are there new relations or any new improvements, or are matters as they were before, with nothing new worth mentioning?

[Salih] Letters we have exchanged with the brothers in Saudi Arabia revolve around border issues and future relations. [Words indistinct] are not governed by emotions. However, we must establish bases for these relations. With respect to border issues, we have exchanged letters concerning the borders. The issue of borders is an old one between ourselves and the brothers. The discussion is not new. We have said many times, since the establishment of the Republic of Yemen, that we are always ready to discuss the issue of borders with the brothers and to solve them through brotherly and peaceful means, within the framework of the historical and legal rights of all parties involved. [passage omitted]

Al-Bid Interviewed on Relations Between YSP, GPC

JN1202185493 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Feb 93

[Text] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, has declared that the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] and the General People's Congress [GPC] cement their relationship by focusing on shared principles. Their relationship is determined by an objective need, since the two parties have shouldered the responsibility of launching the project which they set in motion on 30 November 1989 and then put it on a safe footing.

In an interview with AL-SHURUQ magazine published in its latest edition, the brother vice chairman of the Presidential Council said: As partners, we look forward to the completion of rules of joint action that reflect themselves on our united political will. We are pursuing political stability as a precondition for the viability and survival of democracy, he added.

We are not talking merely in terms of the relationship between the YSP and GPC; all political forces must be involved, so that the circle of participation is widened and a united perspective evolves. We are convinced, continued al-Bid, that the exceptional circumstances we are experiencing call for an exceptional analysis and a vision capable of working out a correct order of priorities. With the unity of Yemen now a reality, the primary mission ahead of us is the establishment of democracy, which to date remains a slogan; there is more to democracy than pluralism and parliamentary elections. Democracy, he explained, is an integrated political, economic, and social setup. We are working on closing the doctrinal gap beween ourselves on one hand and the GPC and other parties on the other. We do not claim that we have definitive answers; it is necessary, therefore, that we have an open mind.

In response to a question on the YSP Central Committee's rejection, during its latest session, of the option of merger with the GPC, and the GPC's rejection of the option of alliance, brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid explained that there are real difficulties resulting from such different moods. He indicated that it is not a question of desires by this or that party, but it is embitterment that creates contradictory stands.

The Presidential Council vice chairman said: We are looking for common denominators. The YSP Central Committee has not rejected the merger, but proposed gradual steps to provide and bolster the circumstances for the creation of a closer relationship with the GPC. Your question is apt. This is because some prefer a merger, while others call for an alliance. However, there are other opinions. He added: We are not scared of this variation in opinions. He who finds a suitable solution will be the one having the best opinion. We have to admit that there are difficulties and an ongoing process of change in our country. I believe that the ongoing discussion should focus on opening the road, without giving different names and labels to proposals. He said: Because we, along with the GPC and other parties, are establishing the new Yemeni system, we should find what we need through serious discussions. We should avoid labeling each other. We should avoid being entangled in categorization, so that we can move on to the next stage, which is democracy. Democracy only becomes strong and successful in an atmosphere of dialogue and when it is based on common denominators and each party's understanding of the other.

On what the new Yemeni system can produce in terms of a merger or coalition formula involving the two ruling parties, brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid affirmed that the relationship between the YSP and the GPC plays a major role and can set a basis for the general national coalition. This is because the two parties are linked with tangible ties; both are in power and have organs which should be directed toward establishing a basis involving all parties, irrespective of all obstacles.

In the press interview, the Presidential Council vice chairman also dealt with a number of urgent national issues and Arab and regional problems.

Two Policemen Killed in Shoot-Out With Deputy

JN1602215193 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 16 Feb 93

[Text] An official source at the Interior and Security Ministry has issued a statement to the Yemeni news agency, SABAA', reporting that the ministry regrets the painful incident in which two military policemen were victimized while applying the law and carrying out their duty in Ta'izz City today, Tuesday.

The source said the incident took place when a police checkpost in Hawban stopped a number of armed men in three cars accompanying Sultan al-Sami'i, a member of the Council of Deputies, who was escorting 18 armed men to Ta'izz City. When the soldiers asked him to show a permit, it was discovered that he did not have a permit for such a large number of people. He told the police that he left the permit at his house and suggested that they escort him to his home in Ta'izz to prove this.

Two policemen went with him in his car, and the rest of the police force drove behind them until they reached Sultan al-Sami'i's home. As soon as they reached the house, he, along with the men accompanying him, opened fire on the two soldiers who were escorting them. The two soldiers were killed instantly.

As the rest of men were firing at the policemen and retreating to the house to take refuge, the police requested urgent assistance and the public prosecution forces were summoned. They thought that al-Sami'i and his men were in the house. When the prosecution forces ordered the house stormed, it was discovered that al-Sami'i and his companions had left the house from the back after becoming aware of the seriousness of the crime they had just committed.

The source pointed out that the forces of law and order will stop these evildoers and see that they receive their just punishment.

The source reported the two dead men's names as Ahmad Muhammad al-Sha'bi and 'Abdu Ahmad al-Faqih.

The soldiers who were injured are 'Abd al-Qadir al-Hasani, Ahmad Muhammad al-Sabri, and driver Muhammad al-Yamani.

Security and prosecution forces are pursuing the culprits to arrest and bring them to justice.

Arab League Informed of Airspace 'Violations'

JN1902104693 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0845 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (INA)—U.S., British, and French aircraft taking off from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have continued to violate Iraqi airspace.

Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League has informed the Arab League secretary general that the continued violation of Iraqi airspace by these aircraft is a serious threat to Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity. A letter in this regard said that these aircraft carried out 57 hostile air sorties on 16 February. Iraq's permanent representative requested the distribution of this letter among the Arab League's member states.

Memorandum to UN

JN1902104993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0850 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] New York, 19 Feb (INA)—Iraq has sent a memorandum to the UN secretary general protesting the continued violation of Iraqi airspace by U.S. aircraft with the aim of reconnaissance and provocation. The memorandum said that from 9 to 15 February U.S. aircraft carried out 556 air sorties over different areas at various altitudes and speeds, and dropped flares on some places. Iraq's permanent UN representative requested that this memorandum be circulated as a Security Council document.

Opposition Radio Reports Attacks on Civilians

NC1802164793 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Tyrant Saddam Husayn's troops attacked several areas south of al-Kahla' district. A number of civilians were killed and a large number of unarmed citizens' houses were destroyed.

Opposition sources said that inhabitants of these areas were forced to evacuate their villages after the ostraziced regime's troops began arresting citizens and opened fire on those who tried to resist.

As part of its hostile and repressive policy toward the inhabitants of the marshlands, the ostracized regime has also sent repressive groups to ambush civilian fishermen. Opposition sources confirmed that a number of fishermen were killed, a large number of them were arrested, and others fled to the nearby marshes.

Kurdish Delegation Meets With UK's Hogg

PM1902112793 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 Feb 93 pp 1, 4

[Kamran Qurrah Daghi report: "Kurds Accuse Iran of Opening Its Border With Iraq"]

[Excerpt] London—A high-ranking Kurdish source asserted to AL-HAYAH in Irbil yesterday that last week Iran had opened its border to an extensive trade flow into Iraq along the Qasr-e Shirin-Khanaqin axis (east Iraq), in a manner which represents a clear violation of the international sanctions imposed on it. The source added that other information indicated that the governor of al-Basrah had visited 'Abbadan where he discussed with Iranian officials the possibility of concluding a similar deal across Iraq's southern border.

At another level, a delegation comprising Kurdish and British figures conveyed to Douglas Hogg, British minister of state for foreign affairs, in London yesterday the Kurds' concerns over the attempts to "strangle" them economically. The delegation urged Britain and the other Western allies to provide further economic aid and extend relief operations to the Kurdish region, which is suffering from an economic blockade imposed on it by Baghdad since October 1991.

The delegation comprised Hushyar Zibari, member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party Political Bureau, representing the Kurdish administration; Labor Party Member of Parliament Michael Meacher, shadow overseas development minister; Bishop Trevor Huddleston, a known defender of human rights; and Fu'ad Hanari, who represented the Kurdish cultural center in London.

Zibari told AL-HAYAH that the delegation briefed the British minister on the difficult conditions from which inhabitants are suffering in the areas under the Kurdish administration's control. He described the meeting as "very positive." He added that Hogg had affirmed to the delegation Britain's commitment to continuing to protect the Kurds against any attack the Iraqi forces could launch against them. He had pointed out that the Western alliance had approved several options to guarantee the continuation of this protection, and had stressed that his government insists that international sanctions on Iraq should continue as long as Baghdad is refusing to unconditionally implement all the Security Council resolutions. The delegation had urged that the Western alliance announces a declaration that it would commit itself to providing permanent protection for the Kurds. Hogg had promised that his government would consider the proposal seriously and discuss it with its allies, especially the United States, as soon as President Bill Clinton's administration finishes laying the foundations of its policy toward Iraq. [passage omitted]

* Military Bureau Official Rashid Interviewed

93AE0308A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 6 Jan 93 pp 8-9

[Interview with Comrade Kamil Yasin Rashid, deputy to the permanent secretary of the Military Bureau, by Ahmad al-Dawri: "Comrade Commander Saddam Husayn Set Up Linkage Between Military and Political Ideology for Our Army"; place and date not given]

[Text] The great Iraqi Army is celebrating its 72d anniversary today. This ideological army, whose achievements have delighted brothers and friends and enraged and weakened enemies, has had a spotless record of heroic and brave deeds. Despite all of the conspiracies that were concocted against it, the great Army of Iraq has emerged victorious from all the wars it has fought to defend the great country of Iraq and the glorious Arab nation. It emerged as a more capable army; one that was more willing to face difficulties, and an army that was more capable and more willing to teach enemies unforgettable lessons. The leadership exercised by President and freedom fighter Saddam Husayn gave this valiant army a superiority and an impenetrable invulnerability. It also gave it the additional momentum for making sacrifice and acting with altruism.

ALIF BA' met Comrade Kamil Yasin Rashid, member of Iraq's Command [Council] and permanent deputy secretary of the Military Bureau, on the anniversary of the establishment of our brave army to speak with him about many matters related to our valiant army's record of heroism and sacrifice. Speaking about the national value of the anniversary of the establishment of the Iraqi Army, the permanent deputy secretary of the Military Bureau said:

[Rashid] When we talk about the national value of celebrating the anniversary of establishing our brave army, we have to recall the start of this historic happening. The army was established and allowed to develop in the climate of a people's revolution against the British army of occupation. It is on that basis that the beginning of the army marked the birth of a combat force that would defy conquerors, confront occupiers and greedy schemers, realize the aspirations and hopes of the masses, and serve as an expression of their national and pan-Arab feelings and emotions. The army was established to serve as the national army of Iraq, an impenetrable wall and an armor of steel with the purpose of defending the Arab homeland and the national unity of the people.

Thus, the principles that made the establishment of a national army necessary are the gauge that measures the national value of celebrating this glorious anniversary. These principles, which provide a framework for the army's national and pan-Arab positions, represent the utmost in Arab heroism, instances of which can be found in history. They enriched that army's historic deeds of distinction and heroism in the battles that this army had to fight and contend with. These principles gave expression to the conscience of Iraq and to its finest qualities. They also gave expression to Iraq's high-flying flag, to the symbol of its victories, and to the rebirth of the fighting nation.

Today, we are celebrating this day of honor to express the affection and regard we feel for the heroes who achieved the greatest and the most splendid victories in al-Qadisiyah and in the mother of all battles. There are also pan-Arab implications to this celebration that have to do with defending the Arab nation against its enemies. It is with pride that we point out the historic role that Comrade Commander Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, played in the struggle. He was the one who laid the foundation upon which the national and pan-Arab framework for the mission of the bold Iraqi Army was built. He was the one who strengthened that army's technical and ideological makeup, and he was the one who furthered its material power by considering the army Iraq's arm and the tool of its mighty national will.

[Al-Dawri] The awe-inspiring commander, President Saddam Husayn, has had an intellectual, ideological role to play in setting up the ideological framework for our valiant army? How would you assess that role?

[Rashid] Comrade Commander President Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, has given broad attention to setting up the intellectual, ideological, and military framework of the armed forces. Before the revolution, he organized the party's cells and circles in the army, and he broadened and reinforced the organizational foundations of the armed forces. This was an expression of his faith in the ideological role that the army can play in bringing about revolutionary change in spite of the difficult circumstances, which are well-known. This interest in setting up an intellectual, educational, ideological, and organizational framework for the army grew in the wake of the glorious 17-30 July revolution. The premises of the army's intellectual framework were enriched by the principles and premises of the Ba'th theory of action, the intellectual roots of which were formulated and established by Comrade Commander Saddam Husayn, may God protect him. This was done by means of cultural debates, intellectual talks, and political, economic, and military seminars, which became the intellectual, political, and ideological methodology of the party's military organizations. The goals of the military market were thus achieved when military doctrine and political doctrine were linked to the party's and to the revolution's key concepts, and these concepts are open to a doctrine of life that has taken root in the theater of military action.

There is no doubt that the experience of setting up an ideological framework in the brave armed forces is considered one of the most prominent undertakings of the party's revolutionary makeup, one that has the distinction of Ba'thist intellectual and political thought. As we celebrate this glorious occasion, the anniversary of the establishment of our brave army, taking pride in this creative experiment, which put together the components of the brave Arab character, is something to which we are entitled.

The character of a brave Arab fighter is one whose qualities are inherited and whose positions on the duty of doing battle and fighting are historically authentic. Such positions manifested themselves in the Iraqi Army's steadfastness and monumental endurance in the face of the most vicious conspiracy to be contrived against the country and the nation by America, Zionism, NATO, and Iran.

We may say that Commander Saddam Husayn's premises and the methodology he pursued in building and fashioning an ideological army were expressions of creativity that reinforced the notions of military restraint and conscious discipline. The president's premises and methodology spread the tendency to be loyal, publicized military values and traditions among the troops, and pressed the importance of teaching these values and traditions when shaping the character of a military fighter who will be defending the country and the nation.

[Al-Dawri] What are the most important lessons that our brave army learned from the battles of liberation and sacrifice that it fought? What lessons did the army learn from Saddam's glorious al-Qadisiyah and also from the greatest confrontation in which it was involved, [namely,] the everlasting mother of all battles?

[Rashid] The lessons of battle and combat that we learned from the battles we fought in defense of the country and the nation have been many. Foremost among them is the public's sense and their conscious realization that the comrade commander, the bold Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, is the people's only guarantee for an honorable and a respectable life. He is the only guarantee they have that the forces of the evil enemies will be counteracted. It was by means of his political wisdom, his intellectual genius, and his military leadership skills that the greatest and most splendid of victories in the theater of war and sacrifice were achieved and the greatest achievements in the areas of business and construction were accomplished.

The battles lifted the morale of fighters in the ranks of our brave army, and they also lifted the morale of our great people. The high morale was the product of an effort to develop the character of Iraqis, to harness their energies and capabilities for combat, and to provide them with the weapon of Ba'thist thought. These were decisive factors for achieving victory, for putting an end to the enemies' schemes, and for foiling their aggressive conspiracies.

Battle records reveal that the heroism and bravery manifested by the fighters in our brave army were comparable to the heroism and bravery that marked the Arabs' defense of fairness, Arabism, and principles during the early days of Islam.

One constant and stable fact became clear. It became clear that an organized people and a trained and knowledgeable army that is armed with an understanding of revolutionary ideology is capable of achieving miracles on the battlefield, despite the viciousness of enemies and the capabilities of their weapons.

It follows then that it was Iraqi steadfastness and fearlessness that protected the country and the nation from conquest by enemies. It was Iraqi steadfastness and fearlessness that put an end to the enemies' attempts to contain the area, impose their hegemony on the Arab masses, or threaten the nation's existence and its interests.

[Al-Dawri] Putting together an army and a nation that are synonymous and interchangeable is a task that goes beyond being difficult. How do you view the role of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party in that regard?

[Rashid] The development of a new human being who relies on the struggles of his past, on his heritage of heroism, and on the examples of defiance and power with which our history abounds is one of the strategic objectives of the glorious 17-30 July Revolution. The aim of the revolution's premises is to revolutionize the capabilities of that human being and to awaken his creative capabilities when he undertakes construction tasks and tasks that involve a matter of religious duty. The revolution seeks to implant the principles of the Ba'th Party firmly into the deep thoughts and conduct of that human being as an expression of the affection that an Iraqi has for his country and his nation. An Iraqi is willing to die defending his country, and he is willing to participate in a knowledgeable manner in the process of revolutionary development. He is willing to bring revolutionary resolve to bear on his stance against the conspiratorial schemes of enemies, and he is willing to foil those schemes and put an end to the enemies' aggressive goals.

It was in the context of this revolutionary approach to developing this human being that the party put into action the adage that "building an army and building a nation are synonymous and essentially the same." The party took creative, revolutionary action and put this adage into effect as a model, radiant case of heroic action to do one's duty against the enemies of the country and the nation. This image shone in two epic battles, the battle of al-Qadisiyah and the mother of all battles. It shone in defensive positions that required that all combat capabilities in the armed forces be amassed and mobilized. These positions required that all the people's forces back their armed forces, support them, and line up on their side. Foremost among those who were backing the armed forces were the party's activists who backed the armed forces and, acting as "one brave army and one great nation," fought the battle with them on the same front. Such backing and support had national and pan-Arab implications, which realized for the country and for the nation the greatest of victories under the banner of the great leader, Saddam Husayn, may God protect him. The Arab nation and its struggling masses are undoubtedly deriving from the authenticity of this defensive experience an emblem for their steadfastness and persistence in the face of challenges posed by imperialist America, by Zionism, and by anti-Arab Iran. The foundation that is required is one of revolutionizing the capabilities of the masses so that they can demonstrate their combat and defensive capabilities as well as their capabilities for carrying out their religious duty against evil enemies.

[Al-Dawri] Morale has become a sharp weapon used by all armies. The history of our brave army is one that abounds with sacrifice and heroic deeds. What are you doing today to spread high morale in the army's ranks, and what are you doing to maintain it?

[Rashid] Building morale and strengthening fighters' capabilities is one of the tenets of the party's and the revolution's humanistic, moral, and basic thinking. Fighters are prepared emotionally, intellectually, and ideologically, and their national and pan-Arab resolve is awakened and aroused so that they will join the course that is being taken to build the country, perform one's duty, defend the pure soil of the country, and protect the Arab nation from enemies who have evil intentions and greedy aspirations. The organizations of the party's Military Bureau are inspired by the ideas and directives of the comrade commander, Saddam Husayn, may God protect him. Their premises for charging people's emotions and boosting morale are inspired by those ideas and directives and by the supporter of creative Ba'thist thought that is aimed at promoting the longevity of the great spirit of victory and strengthening the fighters' combat capabilities for defending the land, the people, and the nation. Thus, the banner of victory, the banner of heroic fighters, can continue to fly high under the higher banner of God is Great.

It is in the context of that framework of doing one's religious duty that brave fighters are being provided with moral, intellectual, and emotional weapons. They are being given a national and a pan-Arab education, and they are being immunized against enemies and their intrigues and conspiracies. They are also being immunized against intrusive and alien values and customs; they are being taught to love the country and the nation, and their faith in the principles of the party and the revolution are being reinforced. Despite the enemies' viciousness and their wicked malice against the great Iraq, this morale-building effort yielded a radiant state of steadfastness, valor, constancy, and sacrifice in the theater of war and on the fields of sacrifice. Party activists in the party's military organizations played an active and a defensive role, driving the party's revolutionary ideas and principles deeper among the members by means of seminars, meetings, and visits to the party's military organizations. They reinforced the fighters' morale, and they immunized them against unexpected peril.

What materialized in the field of boosting morale and providing emotional support is a glowing case of exemplary human relations between army leaders and commanders, officers, and rank and file officers. These relations exemplified the values of insisting upon military restraints, exercising care in training, mastering the features of weapons, and adhering to the party's organizational rules. Together, all of these values provided the national momentum that moved people to take constructive action, to do their duty, and to rebuild under the banner of the bold leader Saddam Husayn, may God protect him.

[Al-Dawri] Having fought many battles of honor and dignity defending the country and the nation, what do you think of our brave army's capabilities today to champion fairness and the crucial issues of our nation?

[Rashid] Ever since the date of its establishment on 6 January 1921, the history of our brave army's struggle and of its efforts to do its duty has been a concrete manifestation of its authenticity and of its deep, national and pan-Arab roots. Ever since then, the army's contributions to the people's national and pan-Arab revolutions and uprisings have been effective. The army made those contributions for the purpose of achieving the country's and the nation's goals and aspirations. It fought courageously and bravely in all of the crucial battles that the Arab nation fought against its enemies, and it sacrificed most dearly on the fields of the holy battle. Our brave army traveled far and wide, fighting throughout the Arab homeland to protect the Arab nation and defend its freedom, its dignity, and its cultural and humanitarian existence. Our brave army crowned all of this effort with the greatest of all victories, which it achieved in two epic battles: the battle of al-Qadisiyah and the mother of all battles. History will record the latter battle in its noblest and most radiant pages. Our brave army played a heroic role. The challenge it posed to our enemies was like that of a strike force, coming down on their heads like a steel hammer and crushing the sources of malice and ignorance among the legions of traitors and ambitious schemers. Our army is truly the country's and the nation's army. It is a capable army whose intellectual awareness is a weapon. It is an army in which we can take pride, a brave army whose heroism and sacrifices we can boast about. This brave army of ours is holding its own proper combat position at the forefront of Arab armies in defense of the country and the nation. It is an army with considerable combat experience, power, and capability. It is an army that is firmly resolved to be patient, to endure, to be constant and steadfast, and to distinguish itself with the sacrifices it makes and the risks it takes.

Peres Interviewed on Christopher Visit, Talks in U.S.

TA1902114293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by political correspondent Shlomo Raz at Ben-Gurion Airport on 19 February—recorded]

[Text] [Raz] Mr. Peres, are the Americans demanding that we do anything to solve the deportee affair in anticipation of Warren Christopher's visit here? Are they demanding, for example, that we return more of the deportees or shorten their deportation periods?

[Peres] Certainly not. The compromise reached between the prime minister and the secretary of state explicitly states that the Americans will not present us with any more demands, and they are sticking to this agreement.

[Raz] What about other gestures toward the Palestinians in the territories which Israel would make with an eye toward Christopher's arrival?

[Peres] I believe that Israel is making gestures. For example, Israel has taken great care not to exacerbate the situation in the north. Hizballah and the Iranians have tried to ignite this sector in order to obstruct the peace process. I believe that our statement that the deportations are not a policy but rather a deviation from our policy was well received by the State Department. Our move to facilitate the review of the files on each of the deportees is also such a gesture. All of these constitute goodwill gestures meant to facilitate the secretary of state's first steps in the region.

[Raz] What is the aim of Secretary of State Christopher's tour of the region? Does he want to determine the schedule for the resumption of the talks? Is he sending out feelers or studying the situation?

[Peres] Look, the Americans decided to considerably lower the expectations for this visit, and this is understandable. They are concerned lest there be great expectations which fail to materialize. If you want me to give you a deeper analysis, however, I will tell you that this visit is a message to the region that the Americans have serious intentions regarding the Middle East and the peace process and that they agree to continue with their active role in this process. They also want to hear new ideas on how to advance this process, because as we get closer to maps and real-life facts, we see how difficult it is to solve the problems. I also think that the U.S. delegation will try to determine—albeit in an informal manner—a date for the resumption of the bilateral and multilateral talks.

[Raz] Why in an informal manner?

[Peres] They do not want to commit themselves, because they are not convinced that this goal is attainable. For this reason we must make a distinction between what is stated publicly and what they will strive to attain in private. I also believe—and this is only an assessment—that they will try to solve the Syrian puzzle.

[Raz] Do you share the assessment that the talks will resume during the second half of April?

[Peres] I share the assessment that there is a good opportunity for this.

[Raz] Mr. Peres, one last question: Recently there has been a lot of talk in the United States regarding various budget cuts. What about the aid to Israel?

[Peres] I am happy you asked me this question. First, this issue was not raised by U.S. Administration officials during a day of intensive meetings I held with them. I think I met with half the cabinet, and later I held meetings on Capitol Hill. I met with approximately 20 senators and 33 congressmen. The administration officials told me there is no intention of cutting the aid, because they believe that if they cut the aid to Israel, the Arabs will see this as a reflection of U.S. relations toward Israel, and the U.S. Administration is not interested in creating this impression.

This issue was raised on Capitol Hill, not as a financial problem but rather as a moral one. The senators and congressmen said that because they are asking American citizens to exert great efforts, they expect us to make some kind of symbolic gesture on a small scale. The problem is not one of money but rather of attitude. You will recall that in the past we had forgone $50 million in aid. I explained to them the following: First, it is not true that U.S. foreign aid amounts to only $15.5 billion. In real terms, the aid amounts to $105 billion, because they devote some $90 billion to maintaining the U.S. Army in Europe and Japan.

[Raz] This means that there will be no aid cuts for next year, but what about the future?

[Peres] If the administration does not ask for aid cuts, I do not believe Congress will initiate such cuts.

[Raz] Thank you very much.

Government Weighing 'Goodwill Gestures' to Palestinians

TA1902080093 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] Israel is doing everything possible to remove the deportees issue from the agenda for Warren Christopher's visit, slated to begin on 22 February. The United States has also stated that there is no need to discuss the deportations, because it accepts the compromise reached on this issue. At the same time, however, it has transpired that the Arabs intend to make this one of the main issues in talks with Christopher. Political sources in Jerusalem insist that the deportee compromise remains valid and that there is no room for reopening this issue.

At the same time Israel does not rule out the possibility of making goodwill gestures toward the Palestinians with an eye toward resuming the peace talks in mid-April. Apparently the gestures concerned are those already raised in the past, such as the release of certain administrative detainees.

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 19 February, in a page A1 report by 'Aqiva Eldar, Ori Nir, and news agencies, adds the following: "On the eve of Secretary of State Christopher's visit here, security elements in the territories have prepared recommendations for Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister and defense minister, on improving the living conditions in the territories. Among the recommendations under consideration are the release of elderly and juvenile detainees, the return of people who were deported a long time ago, and additional concessions on the Jordan bridges.

["Within the next few days, Prime Minister Rabin will decide which recommendations to adopt as an answer to Christopher's expected call for confidence-building measures between Israel and the moderate Palestinian circles in the territories."]

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin will consolidate Israel's positions for its talks with Christopher on 21 February, in a consultation with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, Elyaqim Rubinstein, and Itamar Rabinovich. Israel will explain to Christopher that it wants to advance in the Syrian sphere, even if no simultaneous progress is made with the Palestinians. Israel expects the secretary of state to relay this message to the Arab side in the hope that this will encourage the Syrians or that the Palestinians will be pressured into returning to the negotiations.

Minister Rejects Further Moves on Deportees

TA1902065793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Telephone interview with Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer by Gid'on Zelinger—live]

[Text] [Zelinger] Warren Christopher has arrived in the Middle East on a fact-finding tour. He will undoubtedly be satisfied to return to Washington with an announcement on the resumption of the talks and perhaps also a declaration on an additional compromise in the deportee affair. Good morning, Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer.

[Ben-Eli'ezer] Good morning to you.

[Zelinger] Is there anything to talk about here or has Israel said its last word concerning the deportee affair?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] I believe that Israel has done its part. We must look at the positive side here. Yesterday there was a report from Amman according to which 'Arafat agrees to a new compromise—a resumption of the talks in exchange for the return of the deportees within six months, according to a predetermined timetable. This report indicates that the PLO is extremely interested in resuming the talks, which was our assessment all along. It has a clear interest in resuming the talks. 'Arafat knows very well that this is his last opportunity to enter the negotiations. Moreover, there is a contradiction between 'Arafat's public statements about wanting to bring the deportees back and his awareness that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Hamas deportees are those who gave him the greatest trouble on the way to a peace arrangement.

[Zelinger] So this is a public relations exercise.

[Ben-Eli'ezer] I believe that this is indeed a public relations stunt, because 'Arafat knows very well that it is the Hamas members who have most vociferously opposed any kind of settlement, especially a peace settlement.

[Zelinger] This, however, is what the Americans see in the Arab arena: The Syrians are being positive, the PLO apparently agrees to make gestures and is also being positive, whereas Israel remains adamant.

[Ben-Eli'ezer] I think that Israel has done enough. I believe that our agreement with the United States shows that Israel is willing to be flexible even on issues pertaining to our very existence and security—all this in order to return to the negotiating table. I believe, however, that Israel cannot go beyond this. I am not talking here about 'Arafat's conditions—namely, that Israel refrain from additional deportations and other sanctions. It is inconceivable that...

[Zelinger, interrupting] Mr. Ben-Eli'ezer, do you foresee the possibility of additional American pressure? Do you believe that Christopher will pressure Israel to make more gestures toward the Palestinians?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] I cannot speak for the Americans. I can only say that the Americans understand that the agreement between us and them is indicative of the degree to which Israel was willing to meet the Americans halfway—even to the point of relinquishing its basic stands. I want to conclude with the following remark: Instead of setting conditions, 'Arafat had better understand that to date he has failed to implement any of the agreements he has signed. It is not enough to make conditions. 'Arafat must allow the Palestinian delegation to start working, because to date he has been one of the main forces preventing any progress in the peace process. If there is indeed any change in his position, stemming from the fact he now understands that time is running out, I welcome this.

[Zelinger] Thank you, Minister Ben-Eli'ezer.

Beilin Stresses Need To Maintain Madrid Formula

TA1802103293 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 18 Feb 93 pp 1, 2

[Report from Washington by Drora Perl]

[Excerpts] "We cannot reach a peace agreement in the Middle East without U.S. involvement, but pressuring Israel will only achieve the opposite result and will not contribute to the peace process." These remarks were made yesterday by Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin in a briefing to political and foreign correspondents in Jerusalem on the eve of Warren Christopher's visit to Israel. [passage omitted]

Beilin expressed concern lest a demand be voiced to withdraw from the framework of the Madrid conference. Beilin emphasized that "the Madrid formula is not the best possible formula, but it was willingly accepted by all sides. An effort to change the formula would waste a great amount of time, and I fear that instead of dealing with substantive issues we will get entangled in procedural issues."

Beilin said that Israel would oppose changing the makeup of the Palestinian delegation. He explained that "this would take us into a procedural impasse." On the issue of the Palestinians' refusal to hold elections, Beilin said that Israel will not insist the Palestinians hold elections if they refuse, "but we do not know what they really want at all." [passage omitted]

Syria Offered 'Real Withdrawal' for 'Real Peace'

TA1802183293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres stated this evening that Israel is offering the Syrians a real withdrawal in exchange for real peace. He was speaking at a briefing to prominent U.S. commentators and journalists in Washington, shortly before the end of his visit. Our correspondent Arye Golan reports from Washington:

[Begin recording] In the briefing, shortly before the end of his U.S. visit, Shim'on Peres stressed the need that Syria clarify its perception of peace. We are offering the Syrians a real withdrawal in exchange for real peace, he said. The foreign minister asserted that the extent of the withdrawal would depend on the extent of the peace and the nature of the security arrangements. He noted that Israel is aware of the positive changes in Syria's strategic perception of an arrangement with Israel, and is encouraged by it.

Peres was asked his opinion in light of the fact that many Jordanian citizens are Palestinians. He said that contrary to the Likud, the current Israeli Government abstains from using these facts to justify an annexation of the West Bank. The current Israeli Government is interested in a stable and prosperous Jordan, he said.

The foreign minister foresees the possibility that the Arab partners show up for the talks with Israel even if the Palestinians do not. However, he said, the Palestinians will ultimately recognize that they must not dance to al-Rantisi's tune.

Referring to Labor's future in power, Peres said that the party's ultimate test is tied to the progress in the peace process. He referred to the flare-up in Lebanon yesterday, attributing it to Iran's long and subversive arm. Ever since the affair of the deportees started Lebanese Prime Minister al-Hariri has been talking about sovereignty, Peres said, but who can take this talk seriously if all he has in mind is anti-Israeli propaganda. If al-Hariri wants to prove that he is sovereign he must take firm action to stop the activities of the terrorist organizations that use Lebanese soil as a launching pad for their attacks against Israel.

In an interview he granted to a Saudi television network this evening, Peres stressed that just as Saudi Arabia does not want Iraq to score any achievement, so peace-seeking Palestinians do not want Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] to score an achievement either. He stressed that Israel does not want an embittered Palestinian neighbor, but a prosperous neighbor who feels that his lot has improved and that his yearnings have been fulfilled as a result of the negotiations with Israel.

Peres will be flying to New York in a few hours en route to Israel. [end recording]

Knesset Member on U.S. Assuming Golan Positions

TA1802060193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Likud Knesset Member [MK] Binyamin Netanyahu says discussions are under way on a plan to hand over military positions on the Golan Heights to American forces as part of an Israeli withdrawal from the heights. Netanyahu insisted he has good sources to back up his claim. The Likud Knesset member spoke to reporter David Ze'ev:

[Begin recording] [Netanyahu] There are discussions that I am aware of about the idea of a withdrawal from commanding positions, some of which would be turned over to other forces, possibly to American forces, for surveillance and monitoring.

[Ze'ev] And where do you get this information from?

[Netanyahu] I receive it from good sources.

[Ze'ev] And you believe this specific issue will be raised in the upcoming visit of the American secretary of state?

[Netanyahu] I don't know if it will be the subject of this visit, but I know that it will be the subject of the upcoming peace talks in Washington. I also think that this is a very bad idea. It's a bad idea because there is a difference between having UN forces placed as a trip wire between Syria and Israel. We have that now, and there is nothing wrong with it. But that peace is maintained not by the UN, which is there as a symbolic presence. It's maintained by the commanding positions of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] from the Hermon through the lines of fortified hills, which give us not only command of firepower over a numerically superior Syrian Army, but it also gives us unparalleled surveillance—electronic and optical surveillance—that afford us the necessary warning time in case the peace is violated.

The idea that we should relinquish some or all of these positions and hand them over to American or other forces—I assume the discussion involves American forces; to the best of my knowledge it does—I think that this would create greater instability rather than less instability. We would never be sure that we are getting real-time intelligence, and I think it would raise the ante of war rather than reduce it. [end recording]

U.S. Asked To Mediate With Syria Parallel to Bilaterals

TA1802090393 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 18 Feb 93 pp A1, 9

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar, Ori Nir, Gay Bekhor, and Gid'on Elon]

[Excerpt] Israel recently called on the United States to mediate between it and Syria parallel to the direct negotiations between the delegations of both sides. Syria also wants active American involvement to advance a peace settlement with Israel. Political sources in Jerusalem said that the United States might appoint a special emissary to pass on formulas and proposals on the future of the Golan Heights, security arrangements, and the essence of the peace.

In a 16 February meeting of Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and Secretary of State Warren Christopher, also attended by Itamar Rabinovich, Israeli ambassador in Washington and head of the delegation to the talks with Syria, Rabinovich said that continued progress in the negotiations with Syria depends on U.S. involvement. According to Rabinovich without massive involvement by the administration, Syria will find it hard to sign a peace accord with Israel. Christopher said in the same meeting that he recently received from congressmen who had visited Damascus encouraging reports on the Syrian position.

Yesterday, it was learned that official analysts informed the senior political echelon in Jerusalem that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad is ready to talk about full peace in return for an Israeli declaration that under suitable conditions it would be ready to return the entire Golan Heights to Syrian sovereignty. Al-Asad will agree to a normalization in relations only after Israel also reaches a peace settlement with the other Arab states and the Palestinians.

In the analysts' view, Syria is ready to spread the withdrawal over five to 10 years, but it will insist on reciprocity on security arrangements: early warning stations on both sides of the 1967 border and a withdrawal of armed forces and demilitarization on both sides of the border, in other words, in the Golan Heights and the eastern Galilee. The Syrians want to include Lebanon in the peace agreement if Security Council Resolution 425 is implemented. A senior government source said that this evaluation means the government will have to decide this year about the future of the peace with Syria and the Golan Heights.

According to the evaluation by the official sources, PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat continues to be a key figure in any settlement with the Palestinians, and he is the one dictating to the Palestinian delegation all its moves in the negotiations. It has been reported that the Palestinians are interested in returning to the negotiations and are even inviting external pressures to make it easier for them to explain their move despite opposition by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. On the eve of Christopher's departure for the region, the Americans promised the Palestinians that the secretary would focus in his talks with Rabin on the territories on the request to take immediate steps on human rights: stopping the use of antitank missiles in the hunt for wanted men and tightening instructions on opening fire to make sure children are not hurt.

The Americans also expect Israel to bring back veteran deportees and offer substantive improvements in the economy of the territories. Washington, however, rejected Palestinian demands over the deportees, the call for a resumption of the dialogue with the PLO, and a change in the negotiating format decided on in the Madrid conference. [passage omitted]

Golan Residents To Demonstrate During Christopher Visit

TA1802185993 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1830 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The Golan Settlements Committee this evening decided that hundreds of residents of the Golan Heights will stage demonstrations next week during Warren Christopher's visit in Israel. Dozens of demonstrators bearing placards will line the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem highway, while others will follow the guest wherever he goes chanting slogans against a withdrawal from the Golan Heights. This is reported by our correspondent in the north, Menahem Horowitz.

EC Ambassadors Protest Human Rights in Territories

TA1802185693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Ambassadors representing the European Community this afternoon voiced concern about the human rights situation in the territories. This was at a meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin. Jack Katzenell reports:

[Begin recording] [Katzenell] The three ambassadors from the current troika—Denmark, Britain, and Belgium—and the ambassador of the European Community itself spent an hour with the deputy foreign minister. They said there had been an increase in the number of Palestinians killed and injured. They were particularly concerned about the death of children. They also mentioned demolition of houses, but contrary to predictions they did not mention the use of antitank weapons.

Denmark is current president of the European Community, and after the meeting I spoke to the Danish ambassador, (Jakob Ritter).

[(Ritter)] We didn't protest. The troika and the Community had a meeting with the deputy foreign minister where we raised issues concerning the occupied territories, but I cannot go more into detail about the content. I think it's up to the Israelis to tell you what the issue was about, but it was certainly about the occupied territories, yes.

[Katzenell] Are you worried in particular about the use of antitank weapons?

[(Ritter)] The demarche was in very general terms. I would not address myself to any specific means of defense weapons or whatever.

[Katzenell] Is the timing of your submission related to the arrival of Secretary Christopher in the Middle East?

[(Ritter)] No, it's only related to the events of the past and the immediate past, not to the immediate future, nor to the visit of the state secretary from the United States.

[Katzenell] Deputy Minister Yosi Beilin told the ambassadors he would have to study their allegations, but in the meantime he replied that the level of action by the Israeli forces merely reflects the level of violence by those Palestinians opposed to the peace process. He said the Europeans were dealing with the symptom instead of the cause. Instead, the Europeans ought to urge the more moderate Palestinians to return to the negotiating table, Beilin said. It was important not to allow those opposed to peace to exercise a veto over the peace process. [end recording]

Rabin Says Iran Behind Hizballah Moves

TA1702204893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has accused Iran of being behind Hizballah's recent initiatives in south Lebanon and of supplying weapons to the organization.

During a meeting of the Histadrut's steering committee in Tel Aviv, Rabin added that Israel had expected Hizballah offensives prior to the anniversary of the assassination of its former leader Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi.

Lubrani on Attacks on Lebanese Security Zone

TA1702172193 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Telephone interview with Uri Lubrani, coordinator of government activities in Lebanon, by Menahem Friedman and Goni Mardor—live]

[Text] [Friedman] Good evening, Mr. Lubrani.

[Lubrani] Good evening.

[Friedman] A year has passed since the assassination of Shaykh al-Musawi. In light of the Hizballah onslaught against the security zone and their recent attempts to infiltrate into Israel, is there any reason, even slight, to doubt the wisdom of that action, which may have only encouraged more terrorism?

[Lubrani] I do not think that there is any connection. I think that what we are witnessing now is a clear attempt to torpedo the peace process. This is not the first time, and we have become familiar with these almost continuous attempts by Hizballah, which receives both instructions and the means with which to attack us from Iran. I do not think this has anything to do with what happened in the past. Their aim is to sabotage a process which has already began and which they wish to terminate.

[Friedman] If this is their motive then presumably Syria, which also carries some weight with the Hizballah, should have a supreme interest in stopping them, because Syria is a participant in the peace process.

[Lubrani] Syria is playing its usual double dealing game. It has a relationship with Iran which forces it to adopt a very ambivalent attitude. There are certain things Syria permits the Iranians to do, and other things it does not; everything is according to measure, because on the one hand, Syria does not want to lose its links and friendship with Iran, whereas on the other hand, I do not believe that Syria will let Iran carry out actions that will undermine Syria's long-term policy. We are not talking arithmetic here, and the Iranians are definitely encouraging and inciting certain activities in south Lebanon, and we are very much aware of this fact. We see it almost every day, and we knew that the situation would deteriorate on these very dates, on specific dates. These are all merely pretexts to heat things up, and I see no connection with the past.

[Mardor] You are speaking about this as though it was simply a routine matter, and definitely no surprise for Israel.

[Lubrani] It is certainly no surprise. I even believe that the prime minister predicted this would happen several days ago.

[Mardor] And Israel's countermeasures are pinpointed attacks?

[Lubrani] Pinpointed attacks? We will do whatever we think necessary to guarantee the security in the north.

We will not forsake this principle for anything. Beyond that, we will also do whatever is necessary to prevent the derailing of the peace process. I think this is quite elementary.

[Friedman] Mr. Lubrani, were you impressed by Shaykh Fadlallah's remark to the Beirut weekly MONDAY MORNING several days ago, according to which Israel is a concrete fact which cannot be denied? Could this signal the start of a process of resignation regarding Israel's existence from an organization that sought to eliminate the Zionist entity?

[Lubrani] I only have one answer for that: God willing.

[Friedman] When one notes dates in the calendar it is hard to ignore the fact that navigator Ron Arad has been held captive for over six years. Who is profiting from his continued captivity and how does one interest the other side in a prisoner exchange?

[Lubrani] I think that the key to this question is not with us but rather in the hands of those who are holding him. They will decide when to release him only after they conclude that they are not winning but rather losing points by keeping him captive. We are trying, not only me—there is an extensive network of people and institutions trying to promote this matter; however, the key is not in our hands.

[Friedman] Did Shevardnadze bring any new information from Iran?

[Lubrani] I do not want to get into any details on this matter.

[Friedman] Thank you, Uri Lubrani.

General Comments on Hizballah's 'Stinging Defeat'

TA1702182293 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Major General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, the commander of the Northern Command, today said that the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] deployment and alertness proved itself today. Interviewed by IDF Radio correspondents Netan'el Semrik and Asaf Ya'ari, Maj. Gen. Mordekhay said that the attacks carried out by the Hizballah organization today culminated in a stinging defeat.

[Begin recording] [Mordekhay] I would like to hope that the Hizballah organization and those behind it will understand that they have absolutely no possibility of attaining any concrete achievements this way, and if they have learned the lesson of the past few days they may think twice in future; however, we are familiar with the Hizballah and one can assume they will repeat their actions.

[Semrik] Do you think we are over the worst of the Hizballah attacks on IDF and SLA [South Lebanese Army] outposts?

[Mordekhay] The IDF and the Northern Command are constantly deployed and ready. Our deployment and high level of alert continues, and we are ready to face any contingency.

[Semrik] What can you tell the residents of northern Israel on such a tense evening?

[Mordekhay] The Northern Command and the residents of northern Israel are one and the same. They are familiar with our deployment and activities. I am certain that they have confidence in us and are sure that we will do everything possible to reduce the danger and repel the threat to our northern border. Seeing to their safety and well-being is our utmost concern and spurs us to continue our all-out efforts to fulfill our task. [end recording]

IDF Helicopters, Artillery Repulse Hizballah Attack

TA1702204693

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 17 February carries a report by Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari on today's attempt by Hizballah to overrun an South Lebanese Army, SLA, outpost in south Lebanon and the ensuing artillery exchanges between Hizballah and the SLA and Israel Defense Forces, IDF. Ya'ari reports that "in recent hours, there has been a lull in the heavy artillery exchanges in south Lebanon which followed a large Hizballah attack on SLA positions early this morning. The attack was repulsed with the intervention of IDF helicopter gunships and artillery. Four people were killed and over 40 injured in the ensuing conflagration."

Ya'ari notes that "diplomatic efforts by the United States, through Syrian mediation, to persuade the Hizballah to refrain from carrying out an ostentatious attack to mark the first anniversary of the assassination of Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi—an action that could undermine Secretary of State Christopher's visit to the region—failed. This morning, for the first time in the history of the long-standing conflict in south Lebanon, approximately 100 Hizballah guerrillas attacked in broad daylight after 0600. They advanced in a wide line, from the Sujud ridge to the village of Balat. They made planned and coordinated use of mortars, sagger missiles, and rocket launchers along a front line of approximately 20 km and later also attempted to overrun two SLA positions."

Later on, Ya'ari points out that "Israeli sources said that great care was taken to launch shells only at the sources of the offensive fire and not to randomly fire shells at the local villages."

In a short recorded passage, Major General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, the commander of the Northern Command says: "The Syrians run the show in Lebanon, and if the Syrians, the Lebanese Army, the Beirut government, and other elements really want to, then they can bring terrorist activity against us to a minimum." Maj. Gen. Mordekhay asserts: "We have no intention nor desire to harm civilians or to disrupt daily life. We are waging battles against those who wish to harm us and they are the ones responsible for the subsequent results."

Shelling of Jibshit Said To Violate Rabin's Orders

TA1902080993 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 Feb 93 p A1

[Report by military correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[Text] Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister and defense minister, was extremely angry that the village of Jibshit was hit, contrary to his instructions that villages with civilian populations should not be shelled. According to reports from new agencies in Lebanon, at least one woman was killed and 12 people were wounded when the village was shelled.

Yesterday Rabin ordered an investigation into who violated his order. It showed that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] carried out his instructions fully and that it was the SLA [South Lebanese Army] that shelled Jibshit. SLA commanders apologized for the incident and said that it was a mistake.

Senior military sources said that the IDF has an unequivocal policy to fire only at terrorist bases and not at civilian population centers, and that the policy was followed in this case as well. The sources added that in Wednesday's exchange of artillery fire, the IDF and SLA fired hundreds of shells, some from the security zone and some from posts on the northern border.

South Lebanon was quiet yesterday, but Army officers said there is a feeling that the situation could blow up at any moment. They added that the forces are still on a high state of alert.

Rabin Not Considering Harsher Measures in North

TA1702200293 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Yitzhaq Rabin, the prime minister and defense minister, today said that at this stage he is not considering ordering the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] to take harsher retaliatory measures against terrorist activity along the northern border. Rabin expressed the hope that efforts to reduce tension in the area would prove successful. The prime minister asserted that the events in the north constituted no surprise, because Hizballah's memorial days were known in advance. Our political correspondent spoke with Prime Minister Rabin a short while ago.

[Begin recording] [Sukenik] Sir, are we now in the midst of a new stage in the ongoing conflict along the northern border?

[Rabin] No. We have long been in a state of conflict with the Hizballah, and to a lesser extent with certain Palestinian organizations. It was to be expected, and if you recall, one week ago, I estimated that there would be an attempt by Hizballah to step up their activity prior to the first anniversary of al-Musawi's assassination and also to mark the death of the shaykh from Jibshit [not further specified] nine or ten years ago. There was a Hizballah attempt to carry out a wide-ranging attack. They were ultimately repulsed with the artillery exchanges continuing. I hope that we will succeed in achieving our goal, which is to restore quiet and calm. At any rate, we are prepared and ready.

[Sukenik] Your remarks imply that at this stage at least, you are not considering new, perhaps harsher, retaliatory steps by the IDF.

[Rabin] At this stage I think that the results, despite their initiative, indicate an adequate response by the IDF and the South Lebanese Army. Our goal is to restore calm and not to exacerbate the situation. Therefore, at this stage, I see no reason to change the policy we have been pursuing over the past few days. [end recording]

Arab Killed, 3 Wounded by Army Gunfire in West Bank

TA1702175093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Eighteen-year-old Salam Hasan Jazir from the 'Askar refugee camp near Nabulus was killed and three others were wounded by Israeli soldiers' gunfire. One of them sustained moderate injuries, while the other two were lightly injured.

An Army spokesman in the Central Command told our correspondent Gil Litman that the soldiers opened fire at a group of stone throwers who failed to comply with orders to stop. Jazir was seriously wounded and later died of his wounds. The other three were treated on the spot by the soldiers.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1705 GMT on 17 February adds: "Shots were fired this morning at a Border Police patrol in the 'Askar refugee camp. The soldiers returned fire, and nobody was hurt. Earlier, stones were thrown at an Israeli bus in Nabulus' Rafidiyah neighborhood. Soldiers aboard the bus opened fire at the perpetrators, lightly injuring a 17-year-old local resident."

[The report goes on to say that the Nabulus military court today sentenced 20-year-old Iyad Faraj, an inhabitant of the Tulkarm refugee camp, to five life sentences. Faraj was convicted of murdering four Palestinians whom he suspected of collaborating with the Israeli authorities."]

IDF Shoots Dead 1 Hamas Suspect, Wounds 2 in Gaza

TA1802112693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] A suspected member of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] movement has been shot dead in a clash with IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers in Gaza city. Another was wounded and taken to hospital, while the third was captured. An Israel Radio reporter says the three were stopped by a patrol, asked to identify themselves, and shot while trying to escape.

Arab Youth Killed by IDF Gunfire Near Tulkarm

TA1802163493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] A 17-year-old Arab youth was killed this morning by soldiers' gunfire in the village of 'Illar in the Tulkarm District. An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman in the Central Command told our correspondent Gil Litman that an IDF unit conducting an initiated operation in the village encountered a group of suspects who were trying to flee. The soldiers called on them to halt and when they refused, they opened fire in their direction and seriously wounded one of them. A military doctor began to treat him on the spot, but the youngster died of his wounds during the treatment. No identification papers were found on his body, and the IDF is checking the victim's identity and the circumstances of the incident.

Restrictions on Shin Bet Questioned

TA1702180693 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Feb 93 p B1

[Commentary by Ze'ev Schiff: "Fighting Terror With One Hand"]

[Text] Israel fights terror with one hand tied behind its back. Occasionally it does it reluctantly, as if it were about to lose its deterrent power in the face of its most ruthless enemies. We are not talking about the way the Army responds to violent demonstrations in the territories, but about its response to murderous terror, particularly that of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad. Probably no other security service in the world has to cope with such serious problems with its hands tied behind its back because of restrictions on the way it conducts its investigations. Judging by the current situation, terror will increase as the peace process advances. Knesset Member Efrayim Sne, a member of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee who cannot be considered a hawk, argues that we are suckers when it comes to restrictions on the interrogation of murderers. We might create a climate—and there are already signs to that effect—where terror investigators say that if the state wants half-baked results they had better not go farther than is demanded of them.

Obviously, Israel is a democratic society, which, despite the war it is engaged in, wants to live its life according to the law and progressive values and ethics. We must protect this society while battling terrorism. The problem is that the longer we rule over another nation by force the more internal conflicts we face. This does not mean that I am calling for allowing the Shin Bet to operate without maximum external checks and balances. Nevertheless, until an arrangement is attained between us and the Palestinians and so that this arrangement is not thwarted, the war against terror must be fought relentlessly. A dovish approach should be adopted in the negotiations with the Palestinians and the PLO, and a firm hawkish attitude in the war against terror. Otherwise, terror will put an end to the negotiations and will strengthen the extremists on both sides who oppose an arrangement.

Evidence of this internal conflict can be found in the deliberations of the special and permanent ministerial committee (currently composed of Justice Minister David Liba'i and Police Minister Moshe Shahal, as well as Shin Bet and State Attorney's Office personnel) which discussed the procedures and restrictions applied to Shin Bet investigators. One gets the impression that some committee members squirmed in their seats when discussing the term "moderate physical pressure" coined by the Landau Commission. Indeed, this poor wording made many people's imaginations run wild. It aroused the curiosity of the suspects and their superiors due to operational reasons. They have been trying to discern what their interrogators may or may not do and what is contained in the secret portion of the Landau Commission Report, so as to be better able to wage their war against Israel. Any leak, confirmation, or denial weakens Israel's deterrent power.

The term "physical pressure" apparently bothered some committee members. Consequently, they approved a proposal to rename it "additional pressure" and "psychological pressure." Henceforth, instead of "physical" it will be "additional," and instead of "moderate" it will be called "psychological." This may have allayed their qualms, but the truth is that it is merely a semantic change. The war against murderers is the same war, and those who want to weaken Israel's staying power will not be impressed by any changes whatsoever until we surrender.

The question of giving immunity to the interrogators—they should not—did not come up at all. Even when the person being interrogated is a murderer the interrogation is not meant to lead to his death. Basically, violence should not be used in interrogations unless we are dealing with a "ticking time bomb" and human lives are at stake. This approach has been endorsed by all the committees. Even if the investigation is meant to help fight terror, people should not be tortured. An investigation is called for in the event of death, as has been the case on various occasions, even if the interrogators abided by all the rules and restrictions and complied with the law in the service of the state. All the more so if they violated the law. That will be determined by the investigation, and if found guilty the investigators will be held personally accountable. To recall, the Shin Bet does not investigate itself. With the Shin Bet's approval, this authority has now been transferred to the Justice Ministry.

The Landau Commission Report rules that the leeway given to investigators will be occasionally revised. This was done by the previous ministerial committee, composed of Ministers Moshe Arens and Dan Meridor, and is being done now by the Liba'i-Shahal committee. Following the serious incident in 1989 when Khalid Shaykh 'Ali died in the custody of the Shin Bet in a Gaza installation, two investigators were sentenced to six months in prison. The incident led to the establishment of a commission of inquiry headed by Rahel Sukar of the State Attorney's Office with the participation of Shin Bet officers. Some of the Sukar commission's conclusions triggered an internal argument, but the commission did an important job. It was particularly bothered by a report from the field, which consequently led to the dismissal from the Shin Bet of three other investigators involved in the death of Shaykh 'Ali; the Shin Bet had reorganized its investigation procedures and controls earlier, in the wake of the prisoner's death. At the same time, Attorney Uri Slonim was asked to submit recommendations on the accountability of investigators and the Shin Bet's structure, and he proposed greater decentralization.

Sukar's commission agreed to special leeway in extraordinary situations, but demanded that this be reviewed; the current ministerial committee subscribed to this demand. Most of the changes introduced by the commission were cosmetic, but it clarified the meaning of special leeway. Some of these clarifications help the investigators while others impair them. It is a pity that the terror organizations have benefited from unnecessary leaks, which should not have been public knowledge. This is not yet the final word on the issue; the state comptroller is also looking into the Shin Bet's investigations.

Arab Elected Communist Party Secretary General

TA1502095293 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 15 Feb 93 p A5

[Report by Gabi Zohar]

[Text] This week, for the first time in its history, MAQI [Israel Communist Party] elected an Arab as the party's secretary general. He is Muhammad Nahfa, a former Knesset member and a resident of the Druze village of Bayt Jann.

Nahfa replaces Me'ir Wilner, who served in this job almost since the foundation of Israel.

For the first time since MAQI's establishment, the job was contested publicly. Nahfa bested his rival, Dr. Ahmad Sa'd, an economist from the village of Abu-Sinan in the Western Galilee, by three votes.

Nahfa decided to leave the party on the eve of the last Knesset elections when he realized he did not have much chance of being elected to the Knesset. Intense lobbying by Druze MAQI members and colleagues persuaded Nahfa, who served only one term in the Knesset, to stay on.

After his victory, Nahfa told the 39 members of the Central Committee that he will do his utmost to create an atmosphere of camaraderie in order to reunite the party.

Hungary Negotiating Purchase of 'Amos Satellite Subsystems

TA1902084393 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 19 Feb 93 p 1

[Report by Yosi Leibovich]

[Text] Communications Minister Moshe Shahal disclosed yesterday that he is involved in advanced negotiations with Hungary to sell it subsystems from the 'Amos satellite.

After a meeting with Bezeq workers in Haifa affiliated with Labor, Shahal told DAVAR that Hungary is showing special interest in transponders, which cost millions of dollars each.

He said that Hungary needs that part of the satellite for domestic purposes, adding that several companies in the world are also negotiating to purchase satellite subsystems. He estimated that Israel will relaunch the 'Amos in about 18 months.

Commentary on Dangers of Dimona Nuclear Waste Disposal

TA1802170493 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 18 Feb 93 p B1

[Commentary by Dani Rabinovich: "A Time Bomb"]

[Text] A problem has surfaced in the wake of a charge voiced by Americans publicly, but so far unofficially, that the Dimona nuclear reactor is too old and too dangerous.

It should be made clear that the issue of nuclear reactors' safety is not a matter of security. There is no risk that suddenly one night an old bomb will set itself up, spontaneously activate its fuses, and dispatch the works and the desert, in a mushroom cloud, up to the sky. The "reactor safety" sphere is closer to engineering, to environmental and medical issues. Uncontrollable uranium fission is liable to cause a disaster: The generation of immense heat may lead to a lethal radioactive leak if it is not released from the core.

The heavy veil of secrecy which has shrouded the Atomic Energy Commission's activity ever since it was established in the 1950's to manage the Israeli nuclear effort, has afforded its chiefs a unique luxury: life exempt from public inspection. They could claim that the issue is most confidential, and that secrecy and obscurity are a prerequisite. (The fact that the nuclear issue is open to public inspection in the United States has not harmed its health. Perhaps the opposite is true.) But when safety, environment, and medical questions are at stake, secrecy becomes an inadequate pretext aimed at suppressing vital public supervision.

Some people, like Ran Edelist from HADASHOT, are concerned about the safety of the reactor's routine operation and about the risk of Chernobyl-like events. That, I believe, is not the main peril. The Dimona reactor is probably very small; one report says its entire output is a mere 20 megawatts. We can assume that nowadays the reactor is active only a fraction of the time. Just for comparison: Each of the four Chernobyl reactors had a 600-megawatt output.

Considering the fact that nuclear power stations are operated mercilessly to exploit their potential, it is plain that the operational risk of a medium-size power station is dozens—if not hundreds—times greater than that of the Negev reactor. The intensive utilization necessarily shortens the life expectancy of power stations' reactors.

In the case of Dimona, we are more concerned with what has been done with the nuclear waste since the reactor's construction.

The term "waste," which tends to bore anyone hearing it, must not obfuscate our diagnosis. Nuclear waste is not a temporary nuisance. It is a time bomb, rather than a garbage can. The term refers to highly intensive materials which release great quantities of dangerous, carcinogenic, lethal radiation. Moreover, they do not get any better with time. Part of the isotopes will remain active for hundreds of years; it was this facet that gave the phenomenon the name of "the problem refusing to disappear." There is a reason why in other countries, radioactive waste is poured into concrete barrels, which are then encased in thick steel containers; following this, storage sites are sought in backward Third World countries whose rulers can be bribed. There was a reason the United States recently allocated half a billion dollars for a survey designed to find an alternative site for nuclear waste storage. The main burial site in Utah is apparently located embarrassingly close to geological faults.

In Israel, despite the utmost proximity to the Great Rift Valley and to an oceanic ridge active in Red Sea waters, the nuclear authorities did not bother to inform the public of the fate of the waste.

Could it be still buried in the Dimona area? Is it possibly elsewhere in Israel? Where? In what geological circumstances? Is it perhaps sent abroad? If it is—how? Via the Ashdod port? Aboard what transport and by what route does it reach its destination? How long does this special cargo stay in the port? On what pier? Do the stevedores know all they should about the hazardous cargo? There are many more unanswered questions.

The question of the public's right to know about the problem is a matter of principle, but there is also the specific question of the potential victims' rights.

It is reasonable to assume that people have taken sick and others will ail from the side effects of this cargo. In the current state of secrecy, there is no hope of divining who these people will be and in what area they live. And they have no way to fight for their rights.

The active reactor is not the problem. It is small and only partially activated. Edelist's quote: 20 megawatts. A toy. The more significant problem is the nuclear waste.

The case of the Dimona nuclear reactor is similar to that of the VOA relay station in the 'Arava: In both cases, the Negev needed the Americans to save it from the Israeli Government.

Commentary Views Issue of Nuclear Dialogue

TA1902115293 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 Feb 93 p B1

[Commentary by Dan Margalit: "The Price of Nuclear Capability"]

[Text] Several Knesset members have recently accepted an invitation to attend a Boston convention on disarmament. No'omi Hazan and Efrayim Sne were among these parliamentarians. They will find themselves facing scientists, philosophers, and representatives of political causes who will want to crack the secrets of Israel's nuclear option.

The absence of Ori Or, chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, will not be accidental. His staying away was designed to signal to the Americans that for the Israeli political establishment, the Boston convention is an expression of an undesirable U.S. strategy aimed at preventing Israel from conducting its nuclear affairs far away from international attention.

Seymour Hersh, the author of the controversial book *The Samson Option*, has not let go of the issue. Writing in THE LOS ANGELES TIMES, he claimed that Israel is in fact holding a dialogue with the United States on the nuclear issue. Jerusalem denied this categorically. The dilemma, however, remains unresolved. There is no unequivocal answer to the question of whether Israel will do better holding a dialogue or ignoring the issue.

Only one possibility is indisputable—namely, that a dead-end dialogue is worse than any search for political solutions; unfortunately, the odds that this will be the case are rather high. If this happens, the U.S. Administration will no longer be able to ignore the issue, and it will have to report Israel's nuclear capability to Congress, inevitably causing considerable difficulty in relations between the two countries. The United States' unflagging interest in Israel's nuclear capability is explained by its desire to prevent the spread of the deadly weapons throughout the world, but mainly throughout the Middle East. A dialogue on this matter will make only a short-term contribution to Israeli-U.S. relations. While George Bush's proposal to perpetuate the existing situation—namely, that Israel will not expand its option and the Arab countries will stop where they are—was tempting, the American initiative stands very slim chances, because no Arab country will take on such a commitment.

Under these onerous conditions, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's present stand represents a wise sequel to Israel's traditional policy. Can anyone still seriously claim—as Yesha'yahu Leibowich, and Eli'ezer Livne, and Ya'ir 'Evron, and others once did—that Israel's nuclear option is but an obsession pursued by David Ben-Gurion and Shim'on Peres? One trembles at the notion mentioned this week in the Knesset plenum that Iran may achieve nuclear supremacy in the region by the end of this decade.

In addition to the American and Arab pressure, the demand that the Dimona reactor be opened to inspection has been voiced in Israel itself. Some of those who made the demand claimed that the safety conditions at the reactor are questionable. Their allegation was supported by Yo'av Kaspi's report in 'AL HAMISHMAR concerning an emergency brochure issued for the benefit of Dimona residents in the eventuality of a reactor malfunction. They also referred to the public's right to know. There is no reason, however, to doubt Environment Minister Yosi Sarid's opinion that reactors older than that in Dimona operate perfectly well throughout the world and that Israel meticulously conducts routine safety checks. Neither can we ignore the indubitable link between those who voice anxiety about the reactor's safety standards and those who propose that we hasten to enter negotiations about Israel's disarming itself of the nuclear option: They speak of safety, but they mean demilitarization.

Rabin is right to reject all Israeli and foreign demands to enter negotiations now, because he will be unable to secure the only price that would make it worth Israel's while to bargain about its nuclear option. Israel's price should be pan-Arab consent to the Jewish state's having a regional nuclear monopoly for a long period—until peace becomes stabilized. Apparently this price cannot be exacted from the Arabs even in exchange for total withdrawal from the territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state.

In embracing the stand against an immediate dialogue with the Americans and the Arabs on nuclear issues, Israel presents two premises: the tactical premise that Bill Clinton's new administration will neither force it to enter such negotiations nor make it pay an intolerable price for this attitude; and the strategic premise that, as time goes by, some Arab country will acquire nuclear weapons. What this probably means is that Israel prefers a very violent balance to total regional demilitarization which would leave it exposed to the Arabs' conventional edge.

This is a gamble. It is a calculated risk. This approach evokes a degree of anxiety which gives rise to renewed strategic debates about the need to prepare "a reaction capability" for the event of a surprise attack on as small a country as Israel. One can argue in defense of this policy. It is reasonable, it seems right, but no one can claim that its advantages have been proven.

It is too soon to say whether Israel's scientists will be able to say in 27 years what the man seen as the founder of the Israeli nuclear option, Professor David Ernst Bergman, wrote 27 years ago to MAPAM [United Workers Party] leader Me'ir Ya'ari, who had reservations about the Dimona reactor: "We do not have the right to trade specific knowledge and the cold assessment of an actual situation for hopes and illusions."

King Husayn Meets 'Arafat, PLO Delegation in Amman

JN1802162993 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received His Excellency Yasir 'Arafat, president of Palestine, and his accompanying delegation at the Royal Hashemite Court today. The two sides exchanged viewpoints on issues of mutual interest, particularly issues related to the tribulation of the kinfolk in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip following Israel's repressive measures and the increase in the number of victims, including children and women. The officials also exchanged views on the future of the peace process, the suffering of the Palestinian deportees, and the continuation of the deportation policy which violates all humanitarian and international conventions and norms. They also emphasized the need to coordinate efforts on Arab issues of mutual concern.

His Excellency Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir; Dr. Khalid al-Karaki, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir; Information Minister Mahmud al-Sharif; and Dr. Fayiz al-Tarawinah, Jordanian ambassador in Washington and member of Jordan's delegation to the peace talks, attended the meeting.

Attending the meeting on the Palestinian side were Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh and Yasir 'Amr, members of the PLO Executive Committee; Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Advisory Committee of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks; Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, member of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations; and Palestinian ambassador in Amman al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim.

'Arafat Accepts Compromise

NC1802181193 Paris AFP in English 1647 GMT 18 Feb 93

[By Randa Habib]

[Text] Amman, Feb 18 (AFP) - The PLO is willing to allow the Palestinians return to the Middle East peace talks if Israel agrees to take back the 400 deportees in stages over the next six months, Palestinian officials said Thursday.

PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat discussed the compromise solution Thursday with Jordan's King Husayn as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher began a Middle East peace mission.

As Israel has already agreed to allow back 100, the remaining 300 would return in monthly groups of 50, said the officials, who requested anonymity.

If Christopher wins Israel's agreement to the deal, the PLO would be willing to allow the Palestinians to return to the peace ~~talks in~~ Washington in April.

'Arafat also discussed the plan on Wednesday with President Husni Mubarak, who meets Christopher in Cairo on Friday.

The PLO, which is excluded from the talks but directs the Palestinian delegation, ordered a halt to its participation after Israel expelled the 415 men to south Lebanon on December 17.

It also wants Washington to resume dialogue with the PLO which it severed in June 1990 and for U.S. guarantees, even private ones, that Israel will halt its policy of expulsions.

These face-saving conditions were submitted to the U.S. Administration by Palestinian peace negotiators, the officials said.

They would help the PLO justify its acceptance of a compromise deal at a time when feeling is running high in the occupied territories over the deporations and the rising number of Palestinians being shot dead by the Israelis.

Western diplomatic sources however doubted that Washington would be willing to agree to measures, such as resuming talks with the PLO, which could upset the Israelis.

Israel has already offered to take back 100 men immediately and the others within a year but the deportees, PLO and Palestinian negotiators have rejected the offer.

Western diplomatic sources in Beirut have said that a compromise deal could be reached during Christopher's stop Saturday in Syria if Israel agreed to submit a timetable for the return of all the deportees within six months.

A spokesman for the deportees, 'Abd-al-Aziz al-Rantisi suggested Thursday that the men could be open to a deal.

"There is no question of accepting a compromise as long as Israel continues its expulsion policy" he said at the camp in no man's land in south Lebanon.

But he added: "We might change our attitude if Israel cancels the expulsions and agrees once and for all to no longer resort to them."

Rantisi, a leader of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] which opposes the peace talks, has until now insisted they all return together, as demanded in U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 passed the day after their deporation.

Israel expelled them for alleged links to the fundamentalist Hamas and the Islamic Jihad groups after the kidnap and murder of a border policeman.

'Arafat Comments After Talks

JN1802210393 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 18 Feb 93

[From the "News at Ten" program]

[Text] His majesty the king and Palestine president Yasir 'Arafat discussed the future of Arab-Israeli peace talks and the suffering of Palestinian people under Israeli occupation. His majesty and Mr. 'Arafat exchanged views on the plight of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip as a result of Israeli oppression and a sharp increase in the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli forces, including children and women. They also discussed the plight of Palestinians expelled by Israel.

The two sides agreed to pursue a coordination strategy towards all issues of common concern. The meeting was attended by the prime minister, the chief of the Royal Court, the foreign minister, the information minister, and Jordan's ambassador to Washington. Attending on the Palestinian side were a number of PLO Executive Committee members, Palestinian peace delegation members, and the Palestinian ambassador in Amman.

President 'Arafat described his talks with the king as cordial and fruitful. He told the "News at Ten" that the PLO insisted on implementation of Security Council Resolution 799 to allow the immediate return of the expelled Palestinians.

[Begin 'Arafat recording] I am very happy, as usual, when I have this opportunity to meet his majesty because discussion and talks was, as usual, fruitful, warm, and very, very positive, and very important too, especially now in this meeting before the arrival of Mr. Christopher to the area and especially here to Jordan, where we had stressed upon the whole issue of the peace process and how Rabin by his activities and by his orders [is] putting more dynamite to explode the peace process, from deportation to collective deportation, from punishment to collective punishment, from massacres to more massacres. All these had been discussed with his majesty and including the problem of the deportees through which we were insisting to implement the Resolution 799. [end recording]

Departure Remarks

JN1902132793 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat left Amman today at the end of a two-day visit to Jordan, during which he met with His Majesty King Husayn and a number of ranking officials.

In a statement to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, 'Arafat expressed pleasure with meeting His Majesty King Husayn yesterday in light of the current changes in the Palestinian and Arab arenas.

He said the talks with His Majesty King Husayn dealt with various important issues that the Jordanians, the Palestinians, and the Arab nation are facing, foremost of which is the peace talks and their progress, and the responsibility of Israel for obstructing this process through the escalation which Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is carrying out, such as collective deportation and terrorism. The latest of these practices have been the massacres in Khan Yunus, Gaza, Janin, 'Illar, and elsewhere. Before that, there was the deportees issue, which is considered a war crime and a violation of the fourth Geneva convention, of Security Council resolutions, and international legitimacy.

'Arafat added that he had discussed with His Majesty King Husayn the Palestinian viewpoint that will be discussed during his majesty's meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during his visit to Jordan. This view deals with the overall peace process in the region in light of the current developments, including the importance of the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue, in accordance with the promise given by former Secretary of State James Baker but not fulfilled.

He also said that the talks with His Majesty King Husayn have been positive and constructive, as usual, and were held in a fraternal atmosphere.

The Palestinian president pointed out the participation in the talks of Faysal al-Husayni and Sa'ib 'Urayqat, who came from the occupied Arab territories for consultations before U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher begins his visit to Jordan. He said their participation in the talks with His Majesty King Husayn was of great significance because they acquainted us with the developments and events taking place in our occupied territories.

'Arafat said that the Palestinian side proposed holding a meeting for the foreign ministers of the Arab countries bordering Israel after the visit of the U.S. secretary of state to Jordan to discuss the results of this visit.

'Arafat was seen off at Queen Alia International Airport by Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir and Palestinian Ambassador in Amman al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim.

Press Previews Christopher's Middle East Tour

JN1902082593 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Press review]

[Text] Jordanian press editorials today discuss U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour in the region, which he started yesterday to reactivate the peace process.

In an editorial entitled "On the Eve of Christopher's Visit," SAWT AL-SHA'B says: Jordanian-Palestinian coordination, which is witnessing tangible progress in the land of steadfastness and perseverance, assumes a special significance on the eve of U.S. Secretary of State Christopher's visit to Amman, especially now that Amman has turned into a citadel for the Arab meetings that discuss the nation's issues and the challenges facing it.

The visits by the Palestinian president and the Libyan envoy to Jordan and their meetings with His Majesty King Husayn result from the Arabs' belief in the importance of the pioneering Jordanian role and in King Husayn's wisdom, experience, and farsightedness as regards what benefits the nation and its vital causes, as well as his concern in putting the Arabs' interest above any other consideration.

In addition to his interest in Jordanian-Palestinian coordination, strengthening efforts to ensure the return of the Palestinian deportees to their homeland, and the regain of the Palestinian people's national rights through a comprehensive, lasting, and just peace, King Husayn does not neglect his concern for the Arab individual wherever he may be, in Libya, Iraq, the Arab Gulf states, or in any other country.

When he meets with the visiting U.S. secretary, his majesty will speak in the name of the entire Arab nation. He will also affirm the Arab position on the peace process and the resumption of the negotiations, the deportees issue, and the international blockade imposed on Iraq and Libya. For King Husayn, the Arab individual is the most precious thing possessed by the Arab nation. He will continue to defend and protect the rights of that individual and ensure that they are respected.

Therefore, one can say that Husayn-'Arafat meeting on the eve of U.S. Secretary of State Christopher's visit to Amman has come at the right time. It will make Christopher hear from Jordan and Palestine the same words and learn the same position, and present to Christopher and his administration back in Washington a picture of the Arab position on the Palestinian deportees issue and the peace talks.

SAWT AL-SHA'B says: The only way out in the deportees issue is to return them to their homes. And, the only option in the peace process is to base it on the resolutions of international legitimacy and the principle of land for peace. The U.S. Administration, in its capacity as the sponsor to the peace process, must remove the major obstacles that Rabin is placing on the path of negotiations.

In its editorial, AL-DUSTUR says: Without any doubt, the U.S. secretary's visit to the region provides practical evidence of the U.S. interest in resuming the peace talks, which are expected to remain stalled unless Washington exerts extraordinary diplomatic efforts to revive these talks, especially since the United States has been the real driving force behind this process since it was launched.

In view of our full commitment to work on achieving a just and comprehensive peace settlement, we wish Secretary Christopher every success in such a mission, which is facing many difficulties.

Therefore, we believe that the major challenge facing the U.S. secretary of state in his current tour is represented in getting an Israeli recognition of a clear and unequivocal abidance by UN Security Council Resolution 799 in order to be able to overcome the new major obstacle Yitzhaq Rabin's government has placed on the path of peace, and, consequently, pave the way for a return by all parties concerned to the negotiations table in Washington.

Paper Raises Questions, Concerns on Secretary's Visit

JN1902092993 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 19 Feb 93 pp 1, 19

[Editorial: "The U.S. Warning: Against Whom? For Whose Sake?"]

[Text] The warning that the United States made prior to the secretary of state's arrival in the region raises many questions and concerns. Such a warning, and the form in which it was put, prompts us to think that Washington may not be interested in seeing the U.S. secretary succeed in his mission. The warning should have been directed against Israel, and Israel alone. It should have also incorporated an assertion by the United States that it would be difficult to convince the Arab parties to return to the negotiations table as long as Israel refuses to fully and truly comply with Resolution 799.

The United States realizes that the deportees issue and Israel's rejection of a UN Security Council resolution have complicated the return to negotiations. Israel, which refuses to return some 400 Palestinians to their country, cannot possibly allow the return of a country to its Palestinian people. Israel, which refuses to show respect for, or implement, Resolution 799 will certainly not respect or implement Resolutions 242 and 338.

What is really surprising about the U.S. warning is the fact that it involves a clear statement that the U.S. may wash its hands of the peace process. Here, a major question arises: Does the United States, which talks about a new world order and about political settlements to international and regional conflicts and crises, have the right to withdraw from the peace process and wash its hands of it?

Then we come to an even bigger question: Would the complete review, which the United States says it will conduct of its foreign policy in the Middle East, cover Iraq? Would Washington turn its back to the Gulf region and reconsider its policy toward that region in the light of its constant allegations that the Iraqis are not complying in full with the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions?

Israel was the party that pushed the peace process into a tight corner. Expelling over 400 Palestinians at the time when preparations were under way for another round of Arab-Israeli talks reveals an Israeli scheme that seeks to deal a blow to these negotiations and torpedo the entire peace process. Instead of issuing its warning to the air, Washington should, in no uncertain terms, direct its warning in the direction of Israel alone. By doing so, it can provide us with a proof that it is still interested in a just peace in the region, in a new world order, and in political settlements to conflicts and crises. Otherwise, the United States will be helping Israeli push the region into a dark tunnel and turning frustration and despair into a calculated and blind extremism that will sweep everything away.

King Husayn Confers With Visiting Libyan Minister

JN1802171793 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received at the Royal Hashemite Court today 'Umar al-Muntasir, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation Bureau. During the meeting, His Majesty King Husayn stressed the need to defend the Arab individual's dignity, rights, and freedom to reach a situation allowing for the creation of a unified Arab position capable of meeting the requirements of the present and the future, as well as ensuring the nation's effectiveness and the rights of future generations.

During their meeting, the officials reviewed Libyan-Jordanian relations and ways of promoting them in various fields. They also discussed the overall Arab situation, the crises from which the Arab nation is suffering and the challenges it is facing. They asserted the need to confront the dangers facing the nation in order to enable it to defend its territories and freedom. They then stressed the need to apply UN resolutions fairly and in a balanced manner ensuring rights and eliminating frustration, despair, and tension.

The guest minister conveyed to his majesty greetings from his brother Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and his appreciation for the position Jordan maintains under the leadership and instructions of His Majesty King Husayn. His Majesty King Husayn asked the guest minister to convey his warm greetings to the Libyan leader and the fraternal Libyan people, as well as his wishes for further progress.

The meeting was attended by His Excellency Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, Royal Hashemite Court Chief Khalid al-Karaki, Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir, and the Libyan ambassador in Amman.

Meeting With Abu-Jabir

JN1802213593 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Jordanian-Libyan talks were held at the Foreign Ministry this afternoon. The Jordanian side to the discussions was led by Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir, while the Libyan side was led by 'Umar al-Muntasir, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation Bureau.

During their meeting, the brother officials discussed relations between the two fraternal countries, issues of common interest, the current Arab situation, and the need to support Arab solidarity in the face of dangers and challenges threatening the nation.

Education Minister Confers With Iraqi Counterpart

JN1702152293 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] A Jordanian team led by Dhuqan al-Hindawi, deputy prime minister and education minister, held an expanded meeting with an Iraqi delegation led by Education Minister Hikmat al-Bazzaz at the Education Ministry's conference hall today. The two teams discussed bilateral cooperation and reviewed the two countries' experiments in the education field.

Prime Minister Receives Pakistani Chief of Staff

JN1702150493 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, prime minister and defense minister, received in his office at the Council of Ministers building today General Shamim Alam Khan, chairman of the Pakistani joint chiefs of staff committee, and his accompanying military delegation.

During their meeting, the two sides discussed cooperation between the two friendly countries in all fields of defense. The officials also reviewed the special relations between the two Islamic countries and means of developing and promoting these ties.

Decorated by King

JN1802211193 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] His Majesty the king received the Pakistani chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, Shamim Alam Khan, and the accompanying delegation. General Khan delivered a message to his majesty from the Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, which included an invitation to visit Pakistan. His majesty accepted the invitation and promised to visit Pakistan in the near future.

The king decorated Gen. Khan with the military Istihqaq Medal of the First Order. The audience was attended by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Fathi Abu-Talib and the Pakistani ambassador to Amman.

Talks With DPRK Parliamentary Delegation Conclude

JN1802184593 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The final meeting of the Jordanian-DPRK parliamentary talks was held at the House of Representatives this morning under the cochairmanship of House Speaker Dr. 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyat and Yang Hyong-sop, chairman of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly.

During the meeting, Dr. 'Arabiyat said that the Jordanian House of Representatives is looking forward to continued visits and contacts and the exchange of expertise between the two countries to realize mutual interests. He stressed that such visits and contacts would help overcome obstacles facing Jordan and the DPRK. He added that at this stage we are facing similar problems, although the situation in our region is more tense. He clarified that we face a new challenge every day, the latest of which is the deportation of a number of Palestinians from their land and homes. He stressed that this is clear evidence of the intentions of the colonialist states and the Zionist occupiers. This, he said, makes it incumbent on all states which love justice and right to view this deportation logically and to condemn such practices, the likes of which history has never seen. Dr. 'Arabiyat voiced the appreciation of the Jordanian Government, leadership, and people for the DPRK's principled and genuine support for the Arab nation's causes, foremost among them being the Palestine question.

For his part, the DPRK official stressed that his visit is very important in that it is aimed at bolstering relations between the two friendly countries. He said that His Majesty King Husayn's welcome of the DPRK parliamentary delegation and his majesty's statements on bolstering Jordanian-DPRK parliamentary relations constitute a factor of confidence and an incentive for strengthening these relations. He also praised the great achievements made in various areas in Jordan under the wise Hashemite leadership of His Majesty King Husayn. He explained his country's position toward Arab causes, foremost among which is the Palestine question, stressing the Palestinian Arab people's right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state on their soil. He then voiced the thanks of his country—leadership, government, and people—for Jordan's support of the Korean people's cause to unify the two parts of Korea.

The meeting was attended by House member Muhammad 'Adub al-Zabn, first deputy House of Representatives speaker, and a number of House members.

Writer Criticizes Palestinian Envoy's Remarks on Deportees

JN1802170693 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 18 Feb 93 pp 20, 17

[Article by Ziyad Abu-Ghanimah, a Muslim Brotherhood leader, carried in the "Orbits" column: "Take It Easy Your Excellency the Palestinian Ambassador: As If You Have Forgotten That Rabin Uprooted al-Rantisi From His Homeland. How Then Could They Come Into Agreement?"]

[Excerpts] As if it were not enough what the brother heroic deportees of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas—the military, jihad wing of the Muslim Brotherhood—and their heroic brothers of the Islamic Jihad Movement, are facing in terms of being targeted by U.S.-Zionist arrows of rancor and their media trumpets; as though those heroic Hamas and Islamic Jihad brothers were not suffering enough in their forced exile under the worst weather conditions; and as if it were not enough what those brothers are suffering as a result of their banishment from the homeland, the kinfolk, and their arenas of jihad in Palestine, thus, his excellency the Palestinian ambassador in Amman, brother al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, insisted on pouring his wrath over their heads and on leveling the harshest accusations against them, at the same time the sky is showering them with snow and hail.

In a sudden, violent attack, and with fiery, sharp words, his excellency the Palestinian ambassador in Amman launched an accusative, provocative, and violent verbal campaign against the Islamic Resistance Movement in Palestine, Hamas, and against one of its symbols and heroes, brother Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi [spokesman for the Palestinian deportees]. [passage omitted]

Does anything justify this furious campaign against the symbol and struggler, brother al-Rantisi? Your Excellency the Ambassador: What in al-Rantisi's logical, balanced words provoked you? A REUTER correspondent asked him whether the deportees represent the Palestinian people. He was not intoxicated by the overwhelming popularity that the deportees have won on both the Arab and Islamic levels, nor did he exploit this popularity to respond that the deportees represent the living conscience of the Palestinian people—by God, they truly are. However, he provided a logical political answer. He answered that unless free elections are held in Palestine to reflect the Palestinian people's true orientation, neither Hamas, nor the Islamic Jihad, nor the PLO can allege to be the true representative of the Palestinian people.

What in these words made his excellency the ambassador get so furious that he has fallen in the sin of comparing the hero and symbol, 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, to the vile criminal, Yitzhaq Rabin, who evicted him from his homeland and separated him from his kinfolk and arena of jihad?

Your Excellency the Palestinian Ambassador: Take it easy! How do you accuse struggler and symbol brother al-Rantisi of having trespassed the national red lines by making such a statement? How do you accuse him of offering free, suspicious service to Israel's ambitions?

How strange! How strange! If this statement, which is correct from a political and logical point of view, offers free, suspicious service to Jewish ambitions (I refuse to say Israeli), and trespasses the national red lines, then what is the meaning of accepting Resolution 242, which legalizes the Zionist entity's usurpation of Palestine? What does the eagerness to follow the mirage of negotiations with the Jews mean? What does deeming armed struggle as the path to liberating Palestine a thing of the past mean? Have these concessions crossed any red, green, or yellow lines?

Your Excellency the Ambassador, allow me to pose one final question: Why are you overflowing with diplomacy and politeness when you deal with the Americans and the government of (Mr.) Rabin—as some refer to him in their writings—but you flex your muscles and yell when dealing with Hamas?

CIS Tour Aimed To Thwart 'Evil' Israeli Objective

JN1602101293 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 16 Feb 93 pp 1, 21

[Editorial: "A Great Success"]

[Text] The high-level Jordanian delegation continues to be received with great warmth and amity in each of the CIS Islamic republics it is visiting. This grand reception expresses the love the leaders and peoples of these republics have for His Majesty King Husayn and their appreciation of Jordan's dignified position.

King Husayn was eager for Jordan to be a pioneer in establishing relations of fraternity and friendship with these republics. He was also eager to dispatch a highly qualified delegation to conclude agreements with these republics in various fields. In light of such agreements, wide horizons can be opened to exchange expertise and proceed together toward a better future.

Since the emergence of the independent Islamic republics, Israel has been trying to establish an Israeli presence under the cover of technical assistance. The real Israeli objective is to set up a barrier between these republics and the Arab and Islamic states and also to prevent these nascent republics from playing an effective role in supporting the Arabs and Muslims. Jordan, therefore, extended its hand to these republics in order to quickly abort the evil Israeli objective, something which aroused the Israeli aggressors' concern and anger.

While looking forward to establishing distinguished relations with the sisterly Islamic republics, Jordan expresses its strong resolve that such relations will be based on mutual respect, trust, understanding of special characteristics, promotion of joint cooperation, and commitment to ethics, so that the fraternal relations between Jordan and these republics will be both positive and productive. Our delegation which is carrying out this noble mission, has presented a true, bright, and honorable image of this country and has gained further love and respect for Jordan, the Arabs, and the Muslims.

No doubt, His Majesty King Husayn's wise directives to his highness the head and members of the delegation were behind the great success achieved by this delegation. This success will remain a light illuminating the path of hope and work for Jordan and the Islamic republics, and will also open new horizons for further joint cooperation.

Al-Rantisi Expects Nothing Positive From Christopher Visit

NC1802141193 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Report by Suhayl Abu-Fa'ur]

[Text] The Palestinian deportees have erected a tent in their camp to be used for seminars and prayers and lectures to the students among the deportees when it rains.

Deportee Dr. 'Aziz Duwayk said today: If Israel wants to move us away from the camp, it should undertake a military operation to evict us. We will not leave voluntarily. Israel would be committing the gravest and most stupid mistake if it tried such a thing, because the world, which has denounced the deportations that violated human rights, will denounce more strongly any military action against the victims, the deportees. He said: The Israeli public, intellectuals, and political parties will also denounce such an act.

Duwayk added: The longer the deportation lasts, the more embarrassed Israel becomes. Like this, Israel would be impeding the Middle East peace process, if it hadn't killed it already.

On an alternative to Security Council Resolution 799 to resolve their issue, Dr. Duwayk said: If Israel pledges not to deport any Palestinian and rescinds the current deportation decision, then our stance will be one that will help to solve the problem.

Official deportee spokesman Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi held a news conference this morning at which he said: We addressed a message to King Husayn yesterday detailing our firm position on our issue, our suffering, and our confidence that the Arab leaders, kings, and presidents will never capitulate. He reiterated his rejection of any compromise solution and said he does not expect Warren Christopher's Middle East tour to bring any positive results. Al-Rantisi added: Any proposal that does not stipulate the implementation of Resolution 799 is rejected. We have buried Security Council credibility and we will stay here if we must to bury the Security Council itself.

On the implementation of the recent resolution on deportation to Jordan, al-Rantisi said: The recent deportation was caused by Security Council weakness toward Israel and by the Council's use of double standards. He asked: Why does the Security Council destroy Iraq and besiege Libya on the pretext that they do not comply with its resolutions?

Refuses Compromise on Deportees

NC1902115793 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1100 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] The Palestinian deportees have reasserted their position rejecting their return home in stages. At a news conference today, deportees spokesman Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi called on the region's countries to withdraw from international organizations.

Our correspondent in Marj al-Zuhur Suhayl Abu-Fa'ur reports:

[Begin Abu-Fa'ur recording] Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, spokesman for the Palestinian deportees, held a news conference this morning, when he called on Arab, Islamic, and Third World countries to withdraw from international bodies.

In response to the PLO's endorsement of the return of deportees in stages, al-Rantisi said: We decide our own future. Our decision that binds the deportees is that if Israel repeals the deportation decision and pledges to the Security Council and the United Nations to refrain from deporting any Palestinians, we will adopt a stance.

On an Arab League request to dispatch UN forces to the occupied Palestinian territories, al-Rantisi said: This is a request, but it must be followed—without negotiation—by Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories after the destruction, killing, and terrorism that the occupation forces have exercised indiscriminately against our Palestinian people.

On U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit, al-Rantisi said: We refuse any circumvention of Security Council Resolution 799. We respond to international justice providing for our immediate return, but we refuse any compromise over our issue, even if we are faced with death. We will leave the camp only to go to our homes. If anyone wants to uproot us by force, let him do so. He said: Should the Palestinian delegation members resume the peace talks before international justice is fulfilled and Resolution 799 is implemented, it would be tantamount to stating that Palestinian land is not theirs. We reject this. The decision that would bind the deportees is their own.

Shaykh Ahmad al-Haj 'Ali delivered the sermon to the deportees' Friday prayers at noon. He reviewed developments in the deportees issue and the double standards applied by the Security Council. He called on the United States and Secretary of State Christopher to implement Resolution 799 and to pressure Israel to implement it. He said that as deportees, they will not accept any other solution. He extended greetings to the Lebanese forces and to key figures on concluding the International Conference on Support for the Return of the Palestinian Deportees. [end recording]

International Conference on Deportees Ends

NC1802181093 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Excerpt] The International Conference on Support for the Return of the Palestinian Deportees, which began on 15 February, ended its sessions at the Beau Rivage Hotel in Beirut today. A news conference was held during which the final statement was read. The conference was held at the invitation of Lebanese and Palestinian national and Islamic parties and forces.

Hizballah Political Bureau member al-Haj Abu-Husayn Hudruj read the final statement, which follows:

Out of their awareness of the grave dangers that the deportation crime poses and the great challenges targeting the Palestinian cause and the future of our region, countries, and nation, the conferees declare the following:

1. The decision to deport the Palestinian brothers is a grave development and is one of the plots to liquidate the Palestinian cause at the hands of the usurping Zionist entity, which operates with U.S. backing.

2. We reject the partial implementation of Security Council Resolution 799 and insist on its full and immediate implementation. We insist that all those deported since 1947 be allowed to return to their homeland. In addition, we call on the international community to liberate the United Nations and the Security Council from U.S. hegemony. The first credible test of this liberation would be to compel the Zionist entity to implement the resolution or punish it for its intransigence and repeated crimes against the Palestinian people. We warn against the U.S.-Zionist deal to protect the Zionist entity from international punishment for its crimes and to perpetuate the deportation of the Palestinian people and Judaize its territories.

3. The Arab negotiators, especially the Palestinian delegation, are called on to withdraw from the bilateral and multilateral talks. We believe continuing the negotiations means continuing with the policy of plotting against the Palestinian cause and its struggling people.

4. The great dangers facing our Arab and Islamic nation under the so-called new world order and following the collapse of the socialist bloc and the lack of international balance require us to improve the level of our political, social, economic, and other relations; to rise to the highest levels of coordination; and to rally and unite all efforts against the U.S.-Israeli-Western axis. We, therefore, call on all the Islamic and national Lebanese, Palestinian, and Arab parties and forces to unite their efforts, mass their ranks, and work together against world arrogance and the Zionist entity.

5. We highlight the importance of the current Iranian-Syrian alliance on the Palestinian cause, which we regard as the central issue in our Islamic and Arab nation's struggle against world arrogance and the Zionist entity. We regard this alliance to be the focal point of the struggle against the Zionist entity in our region and against U.S. attempts to impose its hegemony here.

6. We highlight the importance of the Lebanese stand on the deportees. We stress the importance of maintaining this stand regardless of the pressure.

7. The Islamic and national resistance in Lebanon is the spearhead of the confrontation with the usurping Zionist entity. Its jihad and struggle to liberate the occupied territories is an honor for the entire nation. This requires all Arab, Islamic, and international forces, peoples, and liberation movements that support this sacred right to extend material and moral assistance to this resistance.

8. The conferees noted the first anniversary of the martyrdom of [former Hizballah Secretary General] 'Abbas al-Musawi. They regard the happy martyr as the symbol and beacon for all world liberation movements and for its oppressed peoples.

9. The conferees hailed the steadfastness of the brother detainees, who are standing fast in Marj al-Zuhur, and their confrontation of the deportation decision and the policy of plotting against the Palestinian cause. They exemplify the true determination of the intifadah people in Palestine and expose those who have falsely claimed to represent them. The ones who have made this claim are the ones least qualified to represent these people, defend their rights, or uphold the trust.

The conferees also hailed the heroes of the Islamic and national resistance and the heroes of the Palestinian intifadah in Palestine. These heroes are embodying the Arab nation's conscience and voice and are confirming in their daily struggle against the Zionist entity and with their martyrs that resistance and the intifadah are the only option for liberating all Palestinian soil.

Progressive Socialist Party Representative Sa'id al- Dawi then read the following recommendations:

1. To call for the establishment of a parliamentary committee to make contacts with Arab and international parliaments to stir the issue and win support for the right of all deportees to return to their homes without any preconditions;

2. To call on Arab and Muslim states, as well as nationalist, pan-Arab, and Islamic parties, to provide all types of assistance, particularly educational, to the intifadah and the sons of the Palestinian people within the occupied Palestinian territories and to establish a socioeconomic committee to enhance the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in occupied Palestine;

3. To declare a day of public anger in all Arab and Muslim states against the U.S.-Zionist hegemony that seeks to liquidate the Palestinian cause and other Arab and Muslim issues. This day will be International Jerusalem Day, called by late Imam Khomeyni on the last Friday of Ramadan;

4. To apply the principle of social solidarity to the families of deportees, detainees, martyrs, and wounded persons in Palestine through civil associations and institutions;

5. To establish a media bureau in Beirut to coordinate the coverage of the deportees with all local and foreign news media;

6. To have the delegations taking part in the conference hold news conferences upon return to their homes to explain the conference's goals and recommendations;

7. To call on Muslim and Christian preachers to dedicate sections of their sermons to the deportees cause;

8. To invite authors and intellectuals to hold seminars, write about the cause, and explain the objectives of the deportation process and its impact on the Palestinian cause;

9. To establish an international legal committee to file a lawsuit against the deportation decision with any international body authorized to consider such a case; and,

10. To establish a committee of expatriates in collaboration with the Lebanese Cultural Association and the foreign relations committees in nationalist and Islamic parties to revive activities related to the Palestinian cause. [passage omitted]

Israeli Reinforcements, Shelling in South Reported

NC1902084393 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0815 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] According to reports from southern Lebanon, Israeli forces have reinforced their positions in the border strip. UPI reported that an Israeli armored battalion composed of 20 personnel carriers crossed the Israeli-Lebanese border the night before last and deployed in Marj 'Uyun and the al-Suwayda' and Tuhrah Hills. A number of shells landed last night in the al-Litani River basin and al-Hamra' farm. The bombardment continued until dawn, but no casualties were reported.

Israeli Gunboats Rake al-Rashidiyah Camp, Coastal Area

NC1902110293 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] The al-Wazzani area in Jabal al-Rayhan has come under artillery bombardment from Israeli positions in the al-'Ayshiyah woods.

Our correspondent reported that a civilian car came under heavy machine-gun fire yesterday afternoon in Qa'qa'iyat al-Jisr in the central sector. The fire originated from Israeli positions in the 'Alman and al-Shumariyah Hills. The passengers were forced to leave the car and hide behind rocks.

A Finnish officer with the UN Interim Force in Lebanon told our correspondent that his contingent spotted the car, dispatched a personnel carrier to rescue its passengers, and towed the car away after the firing ceased.

In the meantime, our correspondent reported that Israeli gunboats last night raked the outskirts of al-Rashidiyah camp and the adjacent coastal area with large-caliber machine guns. Israeli gunboats were observed last night patrolling the coast between Sidon and al-Naqurah.

Israel Withdraws Artillery From Southern Town

NC1902122193 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] According to reports from the border strip, the Israeli enemy has withdrawn its 75-mm artillery pieces from al-Tayyibah town in the south. An Israeli convoy guarded by 60 soldiers was seen heading toward the occupied Palestinian territory.

The Israeli reinforcements were deployed in the town on Tuesday.

Prime Minister Says Resistance Not To Be Disarmed

NC1802071693 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has emphasized that the government will not disarm the resistance fighters as long as Israel continues to occupy part of Lebanese territory. He noted that Hizballah's members are Lebanese and that the Lebanese resistance will continue to enjoy its legitimate right of resistance. He added: As long as Israel occupies the south, we have to expect resistance to this occupation. Accordingly, the resistance will not be disarmed.

Defense Minister on Resistance, Ties With Iran

LD1802164693 Tehran IRNA in English 1458 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Beirut, Feb. 18, IRNA—Iran and Lebanon are in the same front against the arrogant powers, Lebanese Defence Minister Muhsin Dallul said here Thursday.

Stressing on the close and firm ties between the two countries Dallul told IRNA in an interview that the Islamic revolution of Iran, enjoying a powerful leadership and policy, plays a significant role in the region.

In view of the double standard policy of the world powers towards nations and support of big powers for the aggressor Israeli regime, Dallul said, "we need solidarity and unity of all combatant forces, and Iran is a vanguard in this regard." He praised the Islamic resistance of Lebanon whose combatants sacrifice their lives to free their homeland. Dallul added that as long as Lebanon is under the Israeli occupation, nobody is allowed to weaken the Islamic resistance or to disarm it.

Elsewhere he said he would discuss military cooperation between Tehran and Beirut with the Iranian officials during his visit to Iran next April.

Fadlallah Defends Role of Islamists

PM1202160193 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 11 Feb 93 p 12

[Interview with Hizballah spiritual leader Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah by Ghassan Shirbil; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Shirbil] How do you see the future of the situation in Lebanon?

[Fadlallah] I believe that the future situation in Lebanon is that it will have no sectarian system, because we note that the abolition of political sectarianism, which is considered an Islamic demand by some people and a national demand by others, was a U.S. proposal before, as it was proposed by U.S. Ambassador Gillespie. It was proposed before the accord agreement. It centered on the abolition of political sectarianism. And we all know that all the background to the accord agreement was American. That is why we consider the abolition of political sectarianism a U.S. plan, on the grounds that the Lebanese sectarian system is a European plan, specifically French. The United States is trying to get rid of all traces of European influence in the region, even in form. Thus I believe that the pressure will be stepped up on the Maronites in Lebanon because, in the U.S. view, the Maronites represent a European case, even if they Americanize themselves.

I believe that U.S. policy is not mainly interested in focusing on the sectarian question. Actually I believe that what is happening in Iraq may not be the final episode. There is an attempt to confuse the political reality through some phrases. I even think that the Kurdish question is not aimed at the establishment of a Kurdish state. The Kurdish question is intended to alarm more than one political line in the region. [passage omitted]

[Shirbil] Do Islamic movements fear that the government could be planning to organize the situation in Lebanon in the light of the situation in the region?

[Fadlallah] I do not believe that Rafiq al-Hariri in his political capacity or in his political background differs from any other Lebanese prime minister. Perhaps what was said about him emanated from the negative reality which the Lebanese people experienced during the elections and as a result of the collpase of national security. Therefore I do not believe that Lebanon's problem cannot be solved by one person, nor can it be complicated by one person. I claim—as I have always said—that there is no one in Lebanon who can divide Lebanon from within, nor is there anyone who can unite Lebanon from within. This is because the Lebanese question does not concern the Lebanese. [sentence as published] It is linked to Lebanon's position in the regional political circle, which is linked to international policy in the region. So I do not believe that the arrival of one person and the departure of another can change the political reality. [passage omitted]

[Shirbil] You have been described as an imitator of Imam al-Khu'i.

[Fadlallah] I am no imitator. I was Imam al-Khu'i's representative. With regard to the scientific position or level, I am a mujtahid and I have my own views on jurisprudence. I was Imam al-Khu'i's representative in his capacity as an Islamic authority for the Shiite sect.

[Shirbil] Has there been a new situation with regard to the Shiite authority [marji'iyah]?

[Fadlallah] There is a name which has emerged strongly in most Shiite positions in the world, that is Muhammad Rida al-Musawi Ghulbaykani [name as transliterated]. And we support his authority. There are small names which have not been able to go beyond local positions.

[Shirbil] When the Iranian Government needs fatwas it turns to two ayatollahs. Is it incumbent on the Shiites to obey what is issued in Tehran?

[Fadlallah] When we talk about Iran as a state, the Shiites are not obliged to obey what is issued by Tehran as a state. There is a Shiite authority in the Shiites' general tradition. It is represented chiefly in Ghulbaykani. And the Shiite authority is not influenced by any state in its decisions, even at the Iranian state level. [passage omitted]

[Shirbil] There is much talk in the press about relations between you and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and other Islamic movements...

[Fadlallah] When I think Islamic, it is natural for us to have relations with every Islamic movement in the world.

[Shirbil] Including the Islamic Jihad Organization?

[Fadlallah] The Islamic Jihad Organization is not a movement in the political sense.

[Shirbil] And the other movements?

[Fadlallah] We have relations with every Palestinian, Egyptian, Moroccan, and Algerian political Islamic movement. But they are like relations between any Islamic movement and any other Islamic movement or any relations between any Islamic figure and other Islamic movements.

[Shirbil] How do you see the Arab nineties, or the remaining part of them? There are signs of a bloody conflict with the fundamentalist tendency in the region?

[Fadlallah] I think that it is the regimes which have determined the color of that conflict. I can assert that the Islamists, whom some people call fundamentalists—a phrase which we completely reject, because fundamentalism in the Western concept means violence and the suppression of other views—the Islamists do not adopt violence as a basis for their movement, nor do they suppress other views. They are open-minded and deal with all other ideas from the position of dialogue and from the position of the natural struggle on the political stage, the cultural stage, and so on. I do not believe that there is any difference between the Islamists and any other people. When violence is imposed on them they defend themselves, exactly as the Islamists did in Afghanistan: When the communist regime forced them to defend themselves, they turned into mujahidin and were regarded as so even by those who do not agree to Islamic moves, which are called fundamentalist moves in other regions. I believe that the way in which regimes deal with Islamists has caused the Islamists to feel that the regimes are targeting them and their freedom everywhere. And we wonder here: Why are Marxists in some of the Arab regimes which describe themselves as Islamic given the freedom to have their own political organization, and why are nationalists and other quarters given the freedom to have their own political organizations, and not the Islamists?

I believe that if Islamists in Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, or any Arab state are given the freedom to have their own political organization, it is very possible that they will operate in a natural way alongside other political tendencies without any problems at all, as is the case now in Lebanon, where Islamists operate with all political tendencies objectively and scientifically. [passage omitted]

Official Notes $50-Million Balance of Payments Surplus

NC1802220093 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Fu'ad Sinyurah, minister of state for financial affairs, said Lebanon is at the start of a stage of economic and financial revival, the signs of which have begun to appear with the improvement in the Lebanese pound's rate of exchange. He added that the results of the government's current efforts to improve the economic cycle will appear shortly.

The minister revealed that the balance of payments registered a surplus of $50 million at the end of 1992 and that the state's revenues during January 1993 totaled 108 billion Lebanese pounds.

In a lecture at the American University of Beirut Graduate Club, Sinyurah stressed that the government's current policy is to obtain loans to finance reconstruction. He added that the international and Arab attitude toward helping reconstruction in Lebanon is more favorable than before. He also highlighted the government's determination to proceed quickly with the salvation and reconstruction process and to reform and activate the administrative sector on the basis of qualifications and ethics.

Phalangist Statement Accepts Government Takeover of Offices

NC1802200293 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 18 Feb 93

[George Shahin report]

[Excerpts] After an extraordinary meeting of the Phalangist Party Political Bureau, under the chairmanship of party leader Dr. George Sa'adah, it issued the following official statement:

1. The Phalangist Party appreciates the security forces' competent handling of the takeover of its offices which have been the site of a rebellious sit-in by people not affiliated with the party. The security forces' task was specified in relevant memoranda by the Defense and Interior Ministries.

2. The party regrets that some politicians initially viewed this issue as an internal dispute, in which the state must not interfere unless it disturbs public order. What happened was a rebellion—an attempt to overthrow the party's legal leadership. [passage omitted]

3. The Phalangist Party has no recourse other than to reluctanctly accept that its offices have been put under the protection of the security forces. The party backs public security and the power of the legal authorities. It is confident that its legal rights will be respected and that these offices will be restored to their owners at the first opportunity. [passage omitted]

Sources Say Peace Talks, Deportees Not 'Contradictory'

JN1902071893 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Sana' al-Imam dispatch from Damascus]

[Text] The Syrian capital is in a state of apprehension on the eve of Warren Christopher's arrival. The political and popular circles are not trying to hide their concern about the progress of the peace process in light of the aggravation of the deportees issue and the circumvention of Resolution 799.

Informed Syrian sources told Radio Monte Carlo that it would have been possible to resume the peace talks in parallel with the deportees issue had some people not resorted to oneupmanship and had some others not sought compromises, as the sources put it, because the entire world wanted the return of the deportees and the resumption of the peace process to take place at the same time. The Arabs should not have placed the deportees cause and the peace cause on two opposite and contradictory paths, and there was no need to show leniency toward implementing UN Security Council resolutions, big or small, the sources said. Thus, the extent of Israeli hostility to peace and international legitimacy would have been revealed and the Arabs would appear to be seeking peace, adhering to this legitimacy and the Security Council resolutions, the sources further said.

Other informed sources told Radio Monte Carlo that the issue of the Palestinian deportees is an obstacle created by Israel within the obstacles it has always placed on the peace path. One must be wary lest one falls into the Israeli trap aimed to stop the bilateral peace talks, which would enable the Arabs to regain their land.

The sources told Radio Monte Carlo of their concern over the possible abandonment of Resolution 799, circumventing it, giving it an Israeli interpretation, or accepting a compromise that undermines its substance, affirming that this will reflect negatively on the UN resolutions on whose basis the Madrid conference was held.

The sources asked: If Israel mobilized all of its resources and influence to fragment and distort an international resolution to return the deportees, who are only a group of persons, what will happen to the basic Security Council resolutions; namely, 242 and 338, which are aimed at returning the territories?

Over the past few days, the Syrian media have been affirming the need for the U.S. Administration to offer guarantees in this regard to Syria and the Arabs.

Press Comments on Christopher's Middle East Tour

JN1902104193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Press review]

[Text] Our press comments and political analyses today focus on U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region, which began with his arrival in Cairo last night. The papers stress that Israel should submit to the international community's will and abide by the UN resolutions so that the Middle East peace process can succeed.

Under the headline "Christopher's First Tour of the Region," the newspaper AL-BA'TH refers to the U.S. secretary's statement that his tour aims to reactivate the peace process and fix a date for the resumption of bilateral talks. AL-BA'TH says: The U.S. secretary added that he will emphasize the Clinton administration's commitment to the peace process. This commitment, however, requires a comprehensive understanding of the Arab viewpoint and the seriousness of the parties' commitment to the peace process. This will tell who is really working for peace and who is obstructing the realization of this target which is sought by the whole world.

AL-BA'TH asserts that the Arab parties still support the peace efforts and they constantly stress their commitment to these efforts. The Arab parties have not done anything to obstruct the peace process ever since it was launched in Madrid. The principle on which the peace initiative was based is clear and frank. The Arab parties' acceptance of this principle was met with a clear, frank Israeli rejection—a rejection that was not confined to words but was coupled with a series of deeds, the least of which was the shedding of more Arab blood in the Arab territories and the crimes of mass deportation, in addition to the continued Zionist affirmation that there will be no withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says: In order for the peace process to proceed on the right path, all efforts should be directed to the party obstructing the process with the aim of removing the obstacles placed before peace and obliging this party to respect the resolutions of international legitimacy. Without the implementation of these resolutions, peace cannot be achieved in this region.

Regarding Israel's obstruction of peace, which is again being expressed at the start of Christopher's tour, AL-THAWRAH says: Rabin's government is today receiving Christopher's mission and the new U.S. Administration's attempts to break the stalemate and resume the peace talks which stumbled under Israeli intransigence, in the same way as Shamir's government received former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker whenever he toured the region. Rabin's government has even gone beyond the traditional construction and inauguration of settlements with which it used to receive Baker and embarked on a large military escalation that may shatter the remaining hopes and dissipate optimism over the possibility of attaining regional security.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Moreover, the tragic situation of the masses in the occupied territories under the yoke of oppression, systematic killings, and a flagrant war of annihilation and destruction, escalated feverishly and became fiercer with the arrival of Christopher when Israeli rockets destroyed Arab houses, turning them into rubble. This has always been an expression of Israel's permanent policy and strategy that served as a wedge conducive to the destruction of the peace process. In this regard, AL-THAWRAH refers to the large-scale aggression against southern Lebanon which reached its climax in the past few hours. This aggression targeted tens of villages and townships in southern Lebanon with its rancorous brutality on the eve of the U.S. secretary's arrival in the region.

In another comment, AL-THAWRAH says: Real peace is one based on full implementation of international legitimacy and its resolutions pertaining to the region's conflict, particularly Resolutions 242, 338, 425, and 799. All these resolutions demand a total Israeli withdrawal and the recognition of the Palestinian people's rights. The paper adds: The United States can play an effective role in turning such peace into tangible facts in its capacity as one of the two sponsors of the peace conference and the party that launched the basic peace initiative and also the source of the greater support for Israel. Will the United States assume its responsibility and save the peace process by pressuring Israel to relinquish its policy that obstructs this process and to submit to international legitimacy and international will?

Talabani Cited on Iran-Iraq Border Opening

NC1802221393 Paris AFP in English 1656 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Damascus, Feb 18 (AFP) - The border between former foes Iran and Iraq was reopened two weeks ago and goods are crossing the frontier, Iraqi Kurdish rebel leader Jalal Talabani said Thursday. Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), gave no details on the reopening or whether it was limited to the section in northern Iraq under Kurdish control.

The Iran-Iraq border was closed during the eight-year [war] between the two countries which ended in 1988. There have been frequent reports of cross-border smuggling, notably in the Kurdish regions of Iraq and Iran.

Talabani also accused Iraq of masterminding attacks in Iraqi Kurdistan, where a Kurdish federal state was proclaimed last October and a parliament elected in May. "The Baghdad regime is capitalizing on the democratic climate in the liberated regions (of Kurdistan) by sending booby-trapped cars and planting explosives in humanitarian aid convoys from Turkey," he said.

He said Baghdad was also maintaining an economic blockade on Kurdistan. The Iraqi government "bars, by every means, the arrival of food and medicines" in the Kurdish-controlled regions.

Talabani said Syria opposed federalism in Kurdistan, adding that he would tell Syrian officials that "federalism is a humanitarian and civilized solution to the Kurdish problem", adding that Kurds were committed to Iraqi unity.

Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam met Wednesday with Talabani, who is trying to reassure states concerned about their own Kurdish minorities, informed sources said.

Talabani's visit to Syria comes a week after Syria, Turkey and Iran—which all have Kurdish minorities—held talks in Damascus about developments in northern Iraq where a federal Kurdish state was proclaimed last October.

Talabani meanwhile denied statements by Iraqi officials that Israelis were sighted in Kurdistan.

Libyan Foreign Affairs Official Arrives

JN1902142993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] 'Umar al-Muntasir, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation, arrived in Damascus this afternoon on a visit to Syria.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', ranking Foreign Ministry officials, and the secretary of the Libyan relations bureau and bureau staff were present at Damascus international airport to welcome him on arrival.

In a statement to the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, al-Muntasir said he is happy to visit Damascus, adding that during this visit he will hold talks with Syrian officials on bilateral relations and current Arab issues.

Kuwaiti Speaker Comments Before Departure

JN1802204593 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The Kuwaiti parliamentary delegation headed by National Assembly Speaker Ahmad 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'dun left Damascus today after a three-day visit to Syria, during which it held parliamentary talks and met with senior officials to discuss means of promoting relations between the two fraternal countries.

The delegation was seen off at Damascus international airport by People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, a number of People's Assembly members, the People's Assembly secretary, and the Kuwaiti ambassador in Damascus.

In a statement to a SANA correspondent, al-Sa'dun said: We had the honor of meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad for three and a half hours. We listened to a briefing from his excellency on various regional issues that concern the Arab nation's present and future.

He added that discussion during the meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad dealt with the need to stop reminiscing and dwelling on past ruins and talking about tragedies. Discussion also dealt with the need to learn from this crisis which harms the Arab nation and to learn from its lessons to overcome the current stage and advance to a better one in the development of inter-Arab relations.

Al-Sa'dun said: During our visit, we conveyed the Kuwaiti peoples' feelings of love, appreciation, and thanks to Syria—its government and people—on its principled position and stand alongside Kuwait since the first day of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Syria's response was fast, noble, and principled. This response became part of the Kuwaiti citizen's psyche and will always remain in his memory.

Al-Sa'dun added that Syria plays a big role not only in inter-Arab relations, but also during the next stage despite the deteriorating situation in the Arab region. We will seek to cement our relations during the coming stage and allow these relations to stand on solid ground.

He said: In the past we used to suffer from a lack of unity in the Arabs' ranks and in their words. Kuwait's crisis and the earthquake that hit the Arab nation proved that there are countries in the region which do have principled stands, at the head of which is Syria through its quick and true response of rejecting aggression, supporting right, and standing by Kuwait.

Al-Sa'dun emphasized the need to develop Arab parliamentary action and to activate the role of the Arab Parliamentary Union to achieve the Arab solidarity we are seeking.

Concluding his statement, al-Sa'dun expressed his personal thanks and those of his accompanying delegation for the generous welcome and hospitality they received during their visit to Damascus.

DPRK Parliamentary Delegation Arrives in Damascus

JN1802214093 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Damascus—Yang Hyong-sop, chairman of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly, and his accompanying delegation arrived in Damascus tonight on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic.

He was welcomed at Damascus international airport by People's Assembly Speaker Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, a number of People's Assembly officials, the Syrian ambassador to Korea, and the Korean ambassador in Damascus accompanied by embassy staff.

During its visit to Damascus, the Korean delegation will hold talks on bilateral relations and issues of mutual concern.

Contract Signed With PRC Company To Supply Dam Equipment

JN1902162493 Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 11 Feb 93 p 2

[By Fasih al-Sallum from al-Raqqah]

[Text] The State Establishment for Land Reclamation has signed a contract with the PRC Sichuan company, which specializes in manufacturing hydroelectric plants. The contract stipulates that the PRC company will supply the establishment with all the necessary equipment and supplies for Tishrin Dam at a cost of $165 million, equivalent to 487 million Syrian pounds.

Engineer Ibrahim Makhkhul, director general of the State Establishment for Land Reclamation, has said: Pursuant to instructions issued by His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and as part of a government plan, an intensive program has been drawn up for importing this equipment and assembling it within a 47-month period to bring the dam on line.

It is worth noting that Tishrin Dam, which is being built by Syrian expertise and which is located at the end of al-Asad Lake, is aimed at generating 630 megawatts of electricity through the building of a hydroelectric generating station comprising six groups, the capacity of each being 105 megawatts.

Afghanistan

Pakistani Party Groups Meet With Rabbani

LD1802201193 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani last evening at 2100 received personalities of the Jama'at-e Eslami Pakistan, headed by the leader of Jama'at, esteemed Qazi Hussain Ahmed. General Hamid Gul was among them. During the meeting two-hour talks were held on topics concerned with the establishment of permanent peace.

Also the personalities of Jama'at-e Eslami-e Pakistan yesterday morning met with the minister of defense of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, esteemed Ahmad Shah Mas'ud.

According to a BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY report the leader of Jama'at-e Eslami-e Pakistan, esteemed Qazi Hussain Ahmed and the (?deputy leader) of the Jama'at, esteemed [name indistinct], esteemed Mawlana Jan Mohammad Abasi, and esteemed General Hamid Gol and other personalities yesterday met twice with Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar. During these meetings, which lasted for five hours, talks were held concerning the establishment of peace and the elimination of the present hostilities.

Esteemed Qazi Hussain Ahmed, leading personalities of the Jama'at-e Eslami-e Pakistan and Pakistani retired general, esteemed General Hamid Gol arrived in Kabul recently to mediate for the establishment of permanent peace.

Khowst Province Placed Under Shura Control

BK1602130793 Islamabad THE NATION in English 16 Feb 93 p 5

[Text] Peshawar—A representative commission, comprising nominees of the Commanders, Ulema and Elders, agreed on running administration of the Khowst Province, unitedly under the supervision of grand shura headed by Abdol Qayyum Khan.

The decision was made in a Jirga [council] held at Khowst on Sunday. The Jirga was attended by jihadic and religious forces. In the first sitting, the Jirga constituted a three-member commission comprising Haji Na'im Kochi, Jahal ad-Din Haqqani and Abdol Qayyum. The commission in its close-door session endorsed appointment of Abdol Qayyum as Governor of the province while Haji Arman as Deputy Governor.

The commission also decided of constituting a grand shura of at least 70 members for running administration of the province. It decided of inducting at least two nominees from each district in the proposed shura in order to accommodate wishes and expectations. The commission later on made several postings and appointments for other administrative posts and assignments.

After finalising its decision, the commission read out it before the Jirga which was approved after a brief discussion. The Jirga expressed hope that the administration will restore peaceful atmosphere in the province and will attract attention of international donors and NGOs [non-governmental organizations] for playing an effective role in the rebuilding and reconstruction process of the province.

The Jirga, through a resolution, decided of allowing all Afghans from every sphere of life for residing in the province. It also offered accommodation to the war-affected people from Tajikistan and Afghan capital, Kabul. The Jirga decided of according traditional Afghan hospitality to civilians of Kabul and Tajikistan in Khowst and in this regard the government was empowered for political stands.

The Jirga, through another resolution, reminded that in recent past Khowst Province was affected very badly as a result of fighting and bombardment. It called upon the NGOs to initiate rebuilding and reconstruction process in the area. The Jirga assured full security to volunteers of the UN and NGOs. It also asked Pakistani authorities to announce rebate on import of the daily use goods from north Waziristan Agency to Khowst. The Jirga, through another resolution, announced opening of Khowst airport for all sorts of flights and asked the UN to directly use this airport for the supply of relief goods to the war-affected people of Afghanistan.

Ammunition for Heavy Weapons Seized in Kabul

LD1802191293 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The personnel of the State Security Department recently discovered and seized 131 cases of heavy weapon ammunition in some parts of Ward 5 in Kabul. A correspondent of BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY reports that the ammunition was expertly hidden in a vehicle that was to be sent out of the city. The perpetrator of the incident has been arrested and the case is being investigated.

*Ethnic Minority Factions, Sponsors Profiled

93AS0571A Frankfurt/Main FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE in German 4 Feb 93 p 11

[Article by Michael Pohly, instructor in Iranian Studies at the Free University of Berlin, author of the study "War and Resistance in Afghanistan," Berlin 1992, Das Arabische Buch: "Multiracial State Without Majority"]

[Text] To the Afghans what is revolutionary in the country's "new order" lies not solely in Islamism as a foreign deformation of the conventional religion of Islam. They perceive the post-communist period primarily as a reversal of the previous conditions from a racial aspect: It is no longer the Pashtos who rule the land but the "minorities" of Tajiks, Hazara, and Uzbeks.

The Tajiks are probably just as strong as the Pashtos numerically, possibly even a little stronger. There has never been any reliable counting of the population. Previous census counts were always doctored. The ruling Pashtos were careful to retain their reputation as the largest population group. Other than that, the number of inhabitants in the country were always exaggerated in order not to appear so small vis-a-vis the neighbors, as well as to be able to claim more aid from international organizations.

Particularly small, on the other hand, was the number of the Mongolian Hazara, which was usually set at 10 to 15 percent of the total population. The Hazara themselves estimate their number at 30 to 35 percent (a more realistic estimate would perhaps be 20 to 25 percent). The reason for keeping the Hazara down was partly religious since—in contrast to the large majority of other Afghans—they are Shiites, and partly racial: The core of the Hazara is said to go back to a straggling group of a thousand (hazara) from the Golden Horde that plagued Afghanistan in the 13th century. Since then the Pashtos have been exacting vengeance on the descendants of Gengis Khan's gangs of wild horsemen.

Struck by More Than One War

Until the coup by pro-Soviet officers in April 1978 the Hazara citizens were second class. Nevertheless, for a few decades they have possessed a remarkably educated layer. A number of Hazara therefore attached themselves to the communists. Some Pashtos say in ridicule that Afghanistan is now governed by the "mouse eaters." The majority of the Hazara took sides against the insurgents, however, and soon massacres occurred that were reminiscent of the pogroms in the times of the Pashto kings.

The Soviet invasion began in 1979 shortly after the Iranian revolution. The revolutionary crazies and the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war initially prevented Teheran's involvement to help fellow believers in Afghanistan. Furthermore, the Khomeyni regime was much more dependent on the KGB than was generally assumed in the West. The Iranians were also not exactly enthusiastic about the collapse of the Soviet empire, since this eliminated the counterbalance to the "great Satan" in Washington. In Afghanistan they were therefore less concerned with the struggle against communism than with helping pro-Iranian fundamentalist groups in the Hazara regions, largely removed from the control of Kabul and the Soviet Army, win a victory over secular Shiites, who had a more Afghan-nationalist attitude and did not regard Khomeyni as their top religious leader but the Grand Ayatollah Kho'i who resided in Iraq.

Thanks to massive weapons aid from Iran, the Khomeyni faction soon gained the upper hand in the core region of the Afghan Shiites called Hazarajat. Outwardly it appeared as if a war was taking place between the Soviet invasion army and the "Muslim rebels." There was in fact a second war, a war within the war, and at times this civil war was more violent than the national liberation struggle against the Soviets.

On the Sunni side things were not much different. The support provided by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to the mojahedin also had as its goal to help radical Islamists to victory over the moderate traditionalists.

The actual nationalists who advocated modernization and democracy went down in the crossfire between communists and Islamists of the most varied description. The nationalists were the only ones who did not receive any financial, medical or military aid from abroad. Thanks to numerous defectors from the government army they were, primarily in the beginning, the military factor in the resistance. They received an influx above all from the ranks of the "minorities;" more than one-third of the nationalist resistance fighters were Hazara.

The pasdaran ("revolution guards") infiltrated from Iran left no stone unturned in order to apply the ideological thumb screws, but the Hazara repeatedly developed mechanisms to counteract complete coordination. The "intellectuals" continued to enjoy their respect, while in many other parts of Afghanistan any Western-educated person is automatically suspected of being infected with communism—and such a suspicion is usually fatal.

Some Hazara represent the view that there actually does not exist a group which has really sworn adherence to Iran, only some individual persons who are sticking to the "Imam line" (Imam Khomeyni's line). To be sure, several parties and organizations loudly promote the Teheran government line, and some even act as advocates of the radical wing around Khomeyni's son Ahmad. In reality, however, they are all primarily Hazarist, that is to say, they represent the interests of their own people, which in Afghanistan finds itself in a precarious situation.

After all, the Hazara do not live along the border with Iran and not even in a border region but in the middle. Thus they cannot split off or establish their own state unless Afghanistan falls completely apart. This cannot be completely excluded. The Afghan Uzbeks could join with Uzbekistan, the Afghan Tajiks with Tajikistan, the Pashtos with the Pashto north of Pakistan, and the Afghan Baluchis with Pakistani Baluchistan. Then the Hazarajat would stand there more or less alone—and not much would stand in the way of a land connection with Iran, although most Hazara would probably not want it. After implementing their own interests, they would again want some distance to Iran.

This Hazara particularism is no secret to the Iranian leadership. For years they have tried to dominate the "Mongolian backwoods people" with bribes and threats. As a counterpart to the alliance of seven Afghan resistance parties permitted in Pakistan, an alliance of eight Shiite resistance parties allowed in Iran was created. The Sunni Islamists and their backers in Pakistan and Saudi

Arabia were uncomprehending enough to place them at a disadvantage in distributing delegate seats (in a future popular representation). This was the major reason why Teheran was really able to pose as a defender of Hazara interests.

The eight Shiite resistance organizations became the Unity Party (Hezb-e, Wahdat). It immediately began fighting with the Islamic Union (Ettehad-e Eslami) brought into being by Saudi Arabia. The conflicts were among the bloodiest and most horrible ones which in 1992 turned Kabul into another Beirut. At the beginning of the year about three-fourths of the Afghan capital was under the control of Wahdat, the short name for the Unity Party here.

Saudi Arabia was therefore initially the loser in this proxy war against Iran. Iranians (in Wahdat) and Arabs (in Ettehad) even took direct part in the fighting, but the Afghans in general hold the Saudis' Wahhabism to be a foreign heresy. Wahdat, on the other hand, represents the decisiveness of the Hazara never again to acquiesce in the role of a suppressed minority.

The Afghan coalition government, formed despite all these apparently so unbridgeable differences, has approved three ministerial posts for the Hazara, a concession that for the first time takes the new power relationships in the country into account. But the existence of the government, attacked from all sides, of the Sunni Islamist Rabbani, a Tajik, is of secondary importance to begin with. Probably more important, on the one hand, is the insight that the Hazara can no longer be overlooked, and on the other hand the readiness of the Hazara to compromise and not want completely to jeopardize the existence of the state.

Apparently Teheran is playing its cards more cleverly than its rivals in Riyad. Iran also benefits from the reorientation of Pakistani politics which seem to have lost interest in the erstwhile pupil, Sunni Islamist chief Hekmatyar, after he made himself thoroughly disliked by the majority of the Afghans. After Kabul's inclusion in a "coalition of the north" consisting of Tajiks and Uzbeks, Hekmatyar suddenly began to favor the Pashto side. Overnight the Islamic internationalist turned into a Pashto chauvinist. But that did not sit well with the traditional tribal leaders.

Beneficiary Is Primarily Iran

In mid-January 1993 the government in Islamabad finally banned Hekmatyar from Pakistani soil—a sensational step in view of the fact that for nearly 10 years Hekmatyar was the chief recipient of the weapons delivered by the CIA through the Pakistani ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence] to the Afghan resistance. Hekmatyar also gathered around him the largest number of Arab volunteers, who in Afghanistan prepared for civil war at home. For a year the Afghan returnees have been acting as terrorists in several Arab nations, particularly in Egypt, Algeria, and Tunisia as well as in Yemen. A number of them have also been active in the Indian-occupied part of Kashmir.

In Washington efforts are under way to put Pakistan on the list of "terrorist nations." Islamabad reacted to that not only with a press campaign but is also making serious efforts to cut the ground from under the not quite unfounded arguments of the American accusers. Since the Afghanistan conflict is no longer benefiting the Pakistanis, they would prefer to rid themselves completely of the Afghans. Thus, they are annoyed with the fundamentalist president, Rabbani, who recently had his expired term extended by two years over violent opposition. The opinion in Islamabad is not unjustifiably that Afghanistan cannot settle down as long as every transitional president elected for one year is working recklessly toward the goal of becoming president for life. The Pakistanis are angrily noting that the flood of returning Afghan refugees has dwindled to almost a trickle. After the start of a promising exodus last year, the majority is now remaining in Pakistan for the time being. But there is hardly any support coming from abroad for the refugees. Islamabad is particularly irritated with Rabbani, who is making no preparations to bring his family back to Kabul from the Pakistani city of Peshawar.

Rabbani's party, the Islamic Community (Jami'at-e Eslami), has extended feelers to Tajikistan, where like-minded persons have already assumed power, although temporarily. But in Kabul the transitional government is apparently beginning to falter; Tajik Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, the legendary hero of the war of liberation against the Russians, has long since fallen out with his Uzbek partner, General Dostum, but is not able to chase his elite troops out of Kabul despite major efforts. And Hekmatyar is constantly blanketing the capital with fire from his practically inexhaustible stocks of missiles, which he never used against the Soviets but saved for the internal Afghan power struggle.

The often conjured-up specter of a Lebanonization of Afghanistan has therefore long since become reality. In Kabul the pro-Saudi Ettehad is shooting at the pro-Iranian Wahdat (east-west fire), and Pasho-Islamist Hekmatyar is shooting at Tajik-Islamist Rabbani (north-south fire). And all of that is really a generalization that does not take into account the innumerable other feuds. In some regions the former communists are making a comeback. Former coup-President Babrak Karmal has returned to the country and has settled in Mazar-e Sharif, the capital of the north.

All of these squabbles are benefiting the Hazara, who today are relatively united and who are working with determination toward expanding their power. The beneficiary of this development is ultimately Iran. Its representative in Kabul is making efforts to appear modest. He can afford it, like his colleague in Beirut, where the pro-Iranian God's Party is now sharing power.

Bangladesh

Tripura Tribals Cross Border From India

BK1802091393 Dhaka DAINIK ITTEFAQ in Bengali 12 Feb 93 p 1

[Text] Several hundred Tripura tribals from the Indian state of Tripura have crossed the border and taken shelter in three villages under the juridiction of Panchari police station in the Khagrachari District of Bangladesh. District administration sources said that between February 4-8 a total of 106 Indian Tripura refugees have been enlisted. The villages where these refugees have taken shelter are Budhmonipara, Kashtamonipara, and Takahariapara.

In this connection, the Bangladesh Rifles in Panchari has lodged a protest with the BSF [Border Security Force] of India and has asked for the holding of a flag meeting. But no response was received from the Indian side till yesterday.

Reliable sources quoting the refugees said that there were several rounds of clashes between the armed workers of the Assam-Tripura Tribal Force and the Youth Tribal Force of Tripura in the last week of January. Following this incident, both sides tried to raise tolls from the villagers. One group which did not receive the money demanded by them attacked a village named Sukkura in Tripura. They set ablaze 10 houses, including two school buildings, and assaulted many tribals.

India

Pakistan Warned Against Inflammatory Actions

BK1802144293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] India today warned Pakistan against any challenge to its territorial integrity and sovereignty. It also called upon Islamabad to give up its active and sustained support to the state-sponsored terrorism and subversion directed against India and said Pakistan should not have any illusions about New Delhi's firm resolve to counter the challenge. Terming the statement of Pakistan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohammad Siddiqu Khan Kanjoo as totally unwarranted, a spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry in New Delhi asked Pakistan to eschew its path of confrontation which is hardly conducive to peace and harmony in the region.

In a statement, the spokesman said that Mr. Kanjoo's reference to India and its internal affairs violates all recognized norms of inter-state conduct and goodneighborly relations. He said it is regrettable that Pakistan is consistently indulging in inflammatory and rhetorical actions to raise public passions, instead of concentrating on removing its own bigotry and religious apartheid.

State Minister Seeks Normalcy in Jammu, Kashmir

BK1802155693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The union minister of state for home, Mr. Rajesh Pilot, has said that the Center is giving top priority to Jammu and Kashmir on its agenda and making every possible effort to restore normalcy in the state. He was addressing senior officers of the state government in Jammu yesterday before returning to New Delhi after a three-day visit to the state.

In Kashmir Valley, six persons, including four militants, were killed in militancy related incidents in the last 24 hours. A boy was killed and another boy seriously injured when a mine planted by militants exploded at (Vagam Kokanath) in Anantnag District. The security forces also arrested six militants.

Security Forces Kill 4 Militants in Punjab

BK1902053693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0435 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] In Punjab, four militants were killed in separate encounters with the security forces since yesterday evening. According to an official spokesman, two militants were killed near Gurdaspur this morning. One militant was killed and two police constables were injured in an encounter near Batala while another militant was killed near Jullundur.

Germany's Kohl Arrives in Delhi on 5-Day Visit

BK1902034893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] The German chancellor, Dr. Helmut Kohl, arrived in New Delhi last night on a five-day state visit. The external affairs minister, Mr. Dinesh Singh, received him at the airport. The German leader will begin his official engagements in the capital today after the ceremonial welcome. He is accompanied by high-level official and business delegation.

Dr. Kohl will be having wide-ranging talks with the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, to broad base trade, economic, and investment cooperation between the two countries. [sentence as heard] The prestigious Jawahar Lal Nehru Award for International Understanding for 1990 will be conferred on the visiting dignitary for his leading role in the peaceful and democratic unification of Germany. Dr. Kohl's other engagements include meetings with the captains of industry and trade and a visit to the Indian engineering fair in the capital which is featuring Germany as a partner country. Before leaving for Singapore on Monday, the German chancellor will visit the Alora Cave near Aurangabad.

New Trade Opportunities Planned

BK1902052693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0435 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] The German chancellor, Dr. Helmut Kohl, said his visit to India will strengthen the friendship between the two countries. Speaking to newsmen after the ceremonial reception in Rashtrapati Bhavan [president's house] this morning, he said his country wants to deepen the relations in economic, cultural, and other fields. Dr. Kohl said dramatic changes are happening all over the world and there are many positive prospects opening up for the future. The German chancellor said his visit is to explore new trade opportunities between the two countries.

The prime minister, his cabinet colleagues, and other dignitaries received Dr. Kohl. Dr. Kohl who is accompanied by high-level official and business delegation will have wide-ranging talks with the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao. The prestigious Jawahar Lal Nehru Award for International Understanding for 1990 will be conferred on the visiting dignitary for his leading role in the peaceful and democratic unification of Germany.

Before leaving for Singapore on 22 February the German chancellor will visit the Alora Caves near Aurangabad.

Discusses Investments With Rao

BK1902125493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] India and Germany have agreed to strengthen bilateral economic cooperation with Chancellor Helmut Kohl giving a categorical assurance of a major thrust to German investments in India. The assurance came following a 2 hour and 15 minute talks between the visiting chancellor and the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, in New Delhi today. Both the leaders first met with their delegations and later had one-to-one talk followed by a meeting with the German delegation which accompanied Dr. Kohl.

Noting the on-going economic reforms in India, Chancellor kohl said this will substantially improve the prospects of German investments in India. In this context, he referred to a number of investment plans taken up by German companies like Siemen and said the German Government also wants to expand bilateral cooperation in science and technology and interaction between Indian and German companies. Dr. Kohl welcomed the interest shown by Indian companies for taking up business ventures in the former East Germany.

India is to get a soft loan of about 160 crore rupees from Germany. Two agreements were signed for the purpose in New Delhi marking the visit of Chancellor Dr. Helmut Kohl. While about 100 crore rupees is to help finance a lift irrigation program in Orissa, 60 crore rupees is allocated to the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India.

France Invited To Invest in Power Sector

BK1902095493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] India has invited private entrepreneurs from France to invest in the power sector. The power minister, Mr. N.K.P. Salve, told the visiting French minister of state for foreign trade, Bruno Durieux, that there is a great scope for investment in the power sector with attractive returns.

Both the countries agreed to restart work at the (Dulhasti) hydroelectric project in Jammu and Kashmir, which was suspended in August last year.

Delhi, Australia To Cooperate in Mining Ventures

BK1802095293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] India and Australia are to cooperate in the mining sector through exchange of technologies, knowhow, and active interaction between the mining enterprises. This is one of the conclusions of the two-day seventh meeting of the India-Australia Joint Business Council which ended in New Delhi yesterday. The meeting felt that there is a vast scope for Australian investment in India if the Indian economy is further liberalized and the mining sector is opened up fully for equity participation up to 100 percent.

During the meeting, the Australian side welcomed the Indian Government's intention to open the mining sector through private and foreign participation, saying that this would mark another major step in the liberalization of the Indian economy and add a new dimension to the commercial cooperation between the two countries. It was decided that the removal of gas from mines would be stepped up. The Australian delegation said that many of their firms have the technology for this and would use the gas for generating power. Australian firms would also help put down the fires in Indian mines. Both sides agreed India should step up its exports to Australia making special efforts in nontraditional items such as engineering goods, computer software, processed goods, gems, and jewelry.

Meanwhile, a round-table discussion on India-Australian relations began in New Delhi this morning to strengthen ties between the two countries in several fields.

Tajik Prime Minister Departs Bombay for Home

BK1902040293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] The prime minister of Tajikistan, Mr. A. Abdullodzhanov, left Bombay for home yesterday. He was seen off at the airport by the Governor of Maharashtra, Dr. P.C. Alexander.

Commentary Hails Results of Visit

BK1902105493 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Commentary by Om Narayan]

[Text] The three-day visit of the Tajikistan prime minister, Mr. A.A. Abdulladzhanov, to India has gone a long way in further strengthening the close relations between the two countries. His visit is significant in more ways than one. He came in the wake of the visits of a number of distinguished world leaders. The prime minister of the United Kingdom, John Major, was the chief guest at the Republic Day parade. His visit was followed by that of the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin. Chancellor of Germany Helmut Kohl is presently on a visit to India. The Tajikistan chairman of the Council of Ministers came at a most crucial juncture when there is concern about the possibility of Islamic fundamentalism spreading its evil influence in the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia. It must be mentioned that the the Tajik Government is fighting Muslim rebels in certain pockets with free flow of arms supplied to them from Afghanistan.

The fruitful talks between the prime ministers and other leaders witnessed the signing of a number of agreements in various fields. One of the most important agreements was on trade and economic cooperation. Other agreements included technical cooperation, closer ties between the two main commercial banks of the two countries for foreign economic activity in the Republic of Tajikistan. The two countries sought cooperation in the sphere of culture, arts, education, science, mass media, including cinematography and sports. Besides, these four agreements, the two countries put initials on declaration on principles and directions of cooperation. A protocol was signed on cooperation between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan. During the talks between the prime ministers of the two countries, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, announced India will provide $5 million credit to Tajikistan as part of his government efforts to boost bilateral economic cooperation. He also expressed India's willingness to help Tajikistan by providing the services of technical and other experts and training facilities. India has also offered technical assistance to Tajikistan under its technical cooperation program. It has already trained experts in banking, foreign trade, computers, apart from diplomacy.

The Tajik prime minister's views on the question of Kashmir are crystal clear that border disputes between any two countries should be settled by themselves through peaceful and diplomatic means. Speaking at a banquet hosted by the prime minister, Narasimha Rao, the Tajik leader declared that the political leadership was trying to ensure that his country did not turn into a constant hot spot and it was also necessary to see that external factors are not allowed to create regional tensions and conflicts. Praising India for the progress it has made in industrial fields and other fields, he said that the United Nations, the industrialized world and India and China—the two great Asian powers, could work together to resolve local tensions.

Welcoming the Tajikistan prime minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao referred to the ancient ties between the two countries and expressed his optimism that their growing friendship could act as a bulwark in defense of peace and a catalyst for concord and cooperation in our region and around the world. The prime minister remarked that Indian society had traditionally been a tolerant one, wedded to tranquility and to a levelheaded pursuit of legitimate ends. Today however, it is confronted with a specter of violence and conflict because of cross-border terrorism, drug trafficking and religious fanaticism. India, he added, was trying to catch the tide of swift changes by opening up its economy to all the beneficial influence to propel growth. Opportunities have been offered to our friends abroad to cooperate with us for our mutual benefit. Our cooperation with Tajikistan is to be seen in this context—to reinforce by our participation to the fullest extent possible in their own economic and social development. [sentence as heard]

Iran

Khamene'i Addresses Assembly of Experts

LD1802180293 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] At the conclusion of their third session, members of the Assembly of Experts on the Leadership [majles-e khobregan-e rahbari] met with His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the honorable leader of the Islamic revolution before noon today.

During the meeting, the eminent leader remarked that the responsibility of the Assembly of Experts is very onerous and God has entrusted that responsibility to them.

He stressed the need for Iranian scholars and the clergy to multiply their efforts and said: With regard to the present situation in the world and the threats made by the enemies of Islam and the need of nations to understand Islamic concepts, it is necessary that our scholars and the clergy make multiple endeavors towards the implementation of their divine obligations.

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i termed the establishment of the management council at the Qom Seminary and the developments which have been created in that seminary as hopeful and said: With the revelation of the seminaries' endless potential, we will realize the extent of the seminaries' significant role in the spread of Islam and the expansion of Islamic ideology and scientific and research matters. A scientific and clerical move to propagate religion and the spread of Islamic concepts, however, is not limited to seminaries. Our clergy, collectively, should strengthen its direct and face-to-face contact with the people and respond to people's religious and ideological needs.

Stressing that Iran's clerical community have always been sympathetic to the people and a haven for solving their emotional problems and wishes and needs, the leader of the Islamic revolution said: As individuals who have direct contact with the public and are in constant touch with all the people, the clergy should have active and effective presence all over the country and give suitable and beneficial answers to the public's questions.

In another part of his speech the great leader called on the clergy, who enjoy scientific knowledge, to contemplate on and find solutions to Koranic and philosophical issues, religious tales [Hadith], and new issues in their speeches. He said: Today, the banner of true Islam is flying over this land and the country's spiritual and material guidance is in the hands of individuals who have close contact and many common denominators with the clergy. The opportunity to have a determining effect on society has been given to sources [of emulation], religious scholars, theologians and high-ranking clergy. Therefore, no clergyman can consider himself divorced from the general movement of public thought, or be indifferent to it.

He stressed the necessity for conscious and wise struggle by the clergy against incorrect remarks on religious and theological subjects. He said: Today, by engaging in ideological activities, with bravery, clarity, and scientific strength, our clergy and seminaries must answer vain remarks about Islamic issues, and create a new movement in that respect.

Finally, the leader of the Islamic revolution said that the current motivation in the country in general was good and positive, and that the efforts made towards speeding up the country's construction and progress were admirable and praiseworthy.

Prior to his eminence the leader's remarks, Ayatollah Meshkini, the chairman of the Assembly of Experts on the Leadership, remarked briefly that the Assembly is a holy foundation which shoulders historic and significant responsibility. He further expressed the happiness and satisfaction of the members of the Assembly of Experts for meeting with the guardian of the cause of the Muslims [vali-ye amr-e moslemin].

He also said this year's glorious marches on 22 Bahman [11 February—anniversary of the revolution] were one of the miracles of the Islamic revolution. He said: The massive participation of people in those marches stems from divine enlightenment.

Experts Sessions Continue

LD1802190093 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The second and third sessions of the annual meeting of the second term of the Assembly of Experts on the Leadership were held yesterday afternoon and this morning at the Imam Khomeyni Hoseyniyeh. The sessions were chaired by Ayatollah Meshkini. In this session, after deliberation and assessment, the main and alternate members of the research group were chosen by Majles deputies. Also during the session, the law of formation of an experts' presidium, which was proposed to the Majles by the Article 108 Committee, was discussed and approved after expert assessment and certain reforms.

Interior Ministry's Seminar on Borders, Passports

LD1802191793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1230 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Excerpt] The Interior Ministry's nationwide seminar on passports and frontiers convened yesterday and was attended by a group of state officials and First Vice President Habibi. The seminar continues its work today. At its opening session yesterday, first, a report was presented to the participants on the activities of the past year and the effective role of the Interior Ministry in different projects related to expansion and equipment, passport affairs, and the creation of facilities for travellers and guests of the Islamic Republic.

Then Mr. Habibi, in the course of remarks, reviewed the special circumstances surrounding the revolution following victory and the different viewpoints held by officials at the start with regard to the question of frontiers and the intelligence control system of border crossing points. He said: Bearing in mind the special needs of the times and taking into account the hostilities of the enemies of revolution and the system, we have a great need for controlling the frontiers and entrance and exit points, and for revising the regulations governing visas and passports. There is also a vital need for investment regarding this issue.

Mr. Habibi, elsewhere in his speech, emphasized the importance of intelligence systems in controlling borders and the issuance of passports and also the effectiveness of intelligence systems in circumstances when the diplomatic tool is not all that effective. He said: There are special geographical circumstances of the Islamic Republic of Iran apart from the Persian Gulf—sharing the same borders with seven countries in the region, facing excessive entrances and exits by the peoples of these countries and possible mischief on the part of some neighbors, and travel by Iranians, which has a long history. All these combined factors signify that we have to become seriously active in this connection. Moreover, just as the president explained, the relevant organizations should pay serious attention to the issue of Iranians abroad. God willing, we hope we will be able to provide the necessary facilities for issuing visas and passports for those groups of Iranians who, for various reasons, have applied to obtain passports outside Iran.

Then Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Fallahiyan, intelligence minister, said in the course of remarks: The need for security is among the most essential needs of people today. We have no choice but to bear in mind our security interests when performing our responsibilities, especially in the matter of passports and frontiers. [passage omitted]

Qom Sources Cited on Montazeri House Arrest

PM1802160593 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 Feb 93 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Montazeri Under House Arrest and the Controversy Over Authority Multiplies"]

[Text] Tehran, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—The Iranian authorities have placed Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri, the man once regarded as Ayatollah Khomeyni's religious successor, under house arrest and banned all forms of contact with him.

That move came hours after the execution of five people, believed to have been members of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps [IRGC], in the Zrabkhaneh barracks in Tehran on the charge of attempting to assassinate senior government officials.

According to sources in Qom, the day before yesterday an IRGC unit besieged an area in the town where Montazeri lives and where the Religious Studies Institute is situated. But the sources denied previous claims that three people were killed in clashes between the IRGC and Montazeri's supporters. They also denied the statement issued by former President Bani-Sadr claiming that Montazeri had been moved to Tehran.

These measures against Montazeri are part of a wider battle over the question of [supreme Shiite] authority. Some of the most prominent Shiite leaders have challenged 'Ali Khamene'i's claim that he is the religious leader of the world's Shiites.

The five executed people were accused of opening automatic fire on a motorcade carrying prominent figures who were on their way from the home of Hasan Ibrahim Habibi, an assistant of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, on 5 February.

Habibi later canceled an official visit to Ankara but the sources said yesterday that none of the officials, including Habibi, was hurt. At the time, they were on their way to attend a celebration marking the revolution anniversary. The same sources denied the rumor that Hashemi-Rafsanjani himself was in one of the cars attacked.

IRGC units also surrounded Najafabad, Montazeri's birthplace near Esfahan, where the police dispersed a number of pro-Montazeri demonstrations without any significant problems, according to these sources.

* Grand Ayatollah Montazeri's Arrest Rumored

93AS0580A London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Feb 93 p 1

[Text] It was said this week in Iran that Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri, in his daily class at Qom Seminary, criticized an article in the newspaper KEYHAN about dancing, Islam and the prophet, and after that he also said to his students: "Khamene'i and Meshkini usurped my position."

The next day the government seminary students and supporters of Khamene'i and Meshkini decided to disrupt Montazeri's class, but Montazeri got word of it and did not go to his class. There was a clash, however, between the two sides, and a number of people were wounded. On Friday this week 'Ali Meshkini told those attending the Qom Friday prayers service: Ayatollah Khomeyni removed Montazeri from his position because he is "silly." After the prayer service, a crowd of hezbollahis who had been at the ceremony went towards Montazeri's house shouting "Montazeri must be executed," and in the vicinity of his house they scuffled with his supporters. It is said that three people were killed in these clashes and a number were wounded.

Several hours later, security officials took Ayatollah Montazeri to Tehran and turned him over to Evin Prison. In the view of sources close to the clergy in Tehran, the power struggle among the clergy these days has reached a peak, and what is bringing on these kinds of issues is the controversy over leadership and sources of emulation, which remains unresolved.

International news agencies report from Tehran that in the contacts they have had with Ayatollah Montazeri's office in Qom, the report of his arrest was denied. However, sources opposed to the Islamic Republic outside the country emphasize that Ayatollah Montazeri's office has been closed for years and that if someone there denies the report of his arrest, it is obvious that it is one of the regime's agents who was told to do it.

Emami-Kashani Delivers Friday Prayers Sermon

LD1902113293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Today in Tehran, as in all other parts of the country, the mass of prayer givers held their Friday prayers. Delivering the prayer sermons, Tehran's interim Friday prayers leader, Ayatollah Emami-Kashani, referred to the power of Islam and the awakening of Muslims, especially in Islamic Iran, and explained the plots by arrogance against Muslims.

He said: Today the world of arrogance has mobilized all its political, economic, and propaganda power against the Muslims. Referring to the sensational western propaganda regarding the fatwa of Imam Khomeyni, may he be admitted to God's paradise, regarding the killing of the blasphemous Salman Rushdie, and also the insistence of His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the great leader of Islamic revolution, on the implementation of the said edict, he said: Such propaganda stems from the fact that arrogance is afraid of the power of Islam and the awakening of Muslims in various parts of the world. How is it that a scoundrel must be free to blaspheme and to insult sanctities of one billion Muslims but a highly placed authority and a divine man must be restrained and not be free to demand the implementation of God's edict?

Stressing that the extent of the plots by the enemies against Islam is very vast, he said: But likewise the power of Islam is also vast. As in the past when Islam was able to frustrate various plots, today too it has the power to do the same. Today we witness that the Islamic movement and awakening—which began from our own country under the leadership of His Eminence Imam Khomeyni, may he be admitted to God's paradise, and continues to go on thanks to the follow-up efforts of His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the great leader of the Islamic revolution, and the vast presence of the revolutionary people of Iran—are gradually spreading to all other parts of the world of Islam.

The plots of the enemies of Islam are their response to such resurgence. The more world Muslims are awakened, the more they can frustrate the ugly crimes which arrogance is committing in various parts of the world such as in Bosnia-Hercegovina, Palestine, Lebanon, and Afghanistan.

The Tehran interim Friday prayer also referred to a bank account that the great leader has announced for help to flood victims, and he asked for vast popular help toward that end.

Deputies Urge Enforcement of Fatwa on Rushdie

LD1702115293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] A letter signed by over 180 Majles deputies was read in the open session of the Majles today. The letter emphasized the need to execute the fatwa of Imam Khomeyni—may he be admitted to God's paradise—regarding the apostate Salman Rushdie and supported the recent comments of the esteemed leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah Khamene'i on the issue. [passage omitted]

Ambassador to Bonn Blames West for Rushdie Issue

LD1702195593 Tehran IRNA in English 1907 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Bonn, Feb. 17, IRNA—The West's support for a sentenced apostate is an insult to the world's one-billion-plus Muslims, said the Iranian ambassador here last night in one of his strong criticism of the West.

Hoseyn Musaviyan in his meeting with political affairs in-charge at the German Foreign Ministry, Reiner Slagenweit, said Iran holds Europe responsible for provoking the issue by arranging interviews and supporting Salman Rushdie.

Musaviyan who was asked to come to the German Foreign Ministry to brief German officials on the Imam Khomeyni's historic edict against the writer of the blasphemous book 'The Satanic Verses', said Europeans are supporting the apostate because of his insult to the sanctities of over one billion Muslims.

He said Europe seems concerned about the fate of a culprit but has not shown any reaction to the general massacre of Muslims in the European country of Bosnia-Hercegovina.

The death verdict against Rushdie was issued by the late Imam Khomeyni on 14 February 1989 in accordance with divine laws. Rushdie, shielded from justice by the West, is in hiding in Britain ever since.

Slagenweit for his part said German officials know that Islamic fatwa (decree) issued against Rushdie was a religious issue and his government fully respects Islam.

According to Musaviyan, Slagenweit asked the Islamic republic to prevent the execution of the decree against what according to the German official was a 'European' national.

"The West should expect such severe reaction from the leadership of the Muslim world, as long as it supports desecration of Islam, Muslims and their sanctities," he warned.

Musaviyan said Iran is committed to international rules and regulations and the principle of non-interference in other countries' affairs.

Rushdie Issue Highlights West's 'Stupidity'

NC1902102393 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 15 Feb 93 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "Rushdie—Bastion of Powers of Arrogance and Apostasy"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] When Imam Khomeyni issued an immortal edict on the "apostasy" of Salman Rushdie, it caused a global sensation. The decree came a few months after the imam had tasted the "poisoned chalice" of acceptance of Resolution 598. Islam's enemies imagined that after this bitter event in the Islamic revolution's history, Imam Khomeyni would not attack the stronghold of infidelity and polytheism with his old might and strength. So the book *The Satanic Verses* was published; it aimed to determine the Islamic revolution's sensitivity in the defense of Islam.

Proclaiming this decree proved to the world that, in the imam's opinion, defending Islam has nothing to do with political or international circumstances. [passage omitted]

One of the enemy's objectives was to attempt to confine the Islamic revolution within the framework of Shiism and the boundaries of Iran. But the imam rose against them and attacked their trenches in most countries. He declared confidently: "Islam will make the superpowers bite the dust of disgrace," shown in the dissolution and collapse of the world's apostate pole. God willing, it will not be long before the other diabolical superpower is also routed.

The name Imam Khomeyni is etched in Islam and this is the secret of his immortality. Perhaps the key to understanding this lies in Ayatollah Khamene'i's remarks on Imam Khomeyni: "This revolution is recognized worldwide along with Imam Khomeyni."

The West wants to dim the light of the revolution's strong rays by using the Salman Rushdie issue; all the political, cultural, and economic pressure is taking place to have the late imam's historic decree revoked. This is a sign of the political stupidity of the West, which believes that such efforts and pressure will have an effect.

In his address yesterday, the revolution's great leader clearly reiterated that implementing the imam's historic decree is a religious obligation over which no one can bargain. It is clear to everyone that Rushdie and the Satanic Verses are the citadels of the powers of arrogance and apostasy set up against Islam and should be conquered.

Four years ago, a burning bullet was released toward this objective, which will find its target. Everyone awaits that auspicious moment and we are confident that Muslims—Shiite and Sunni—await that historic day together.

Commentary Reviews Clinton's Budget Speech

LD1802223293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Last Wednesday night, Washington local time, U.S. President Bill Clinton, in his first official address to the U.S. Congress, presented his economic program to the deputies present at the Congress session. In his address, the U.S. President, in a bid to gain Congressional support, endeavored to pinpoint the problems of the U.S. economy, without blaming any particular individual so as not to face a negative reaction from the Republican members. Evidently the Republican's policies over the past 12 years in connection with the increase in the U.S. military expenditures, have led to a boost in the government's budget deficit. This sharp and unprecedented rise in the budget deficit which reached $292,000 million at the end of 1992, has caused numerous problems for the U.S. economy.

Clinton, who in the course of his election campaign, promised to cut the government budget deficit by 50 percent during four years of his presidency, last Monday confessed in his televised address that he had miscalculated the economic realities existing in the country. In order to overcome these constraints he called for joint efforts of all the people in paying further taxes to help boost the government income. This is at a time when Clinton's opponents at the peak of the election campaign last November had accused him of being an opportunist in making demagogic promises to the U.S. people. At any rate. Mr. Clinton in his address to the U.S. Congress, on Wednesday night, promised that by cutting the government expenditures in 150 cases, he was trying his best to check the levying of further taxes on the low-income groups.

According to political observers, Mr. Clinton's address can be compared with the 1981 speech of Mr. Reagan in which he endeavored to gain Congress' backing for his economic programs. But the difference lies in the fact that Clinton, based on the prevalent tradition of the Democratic Party, tried to moot the subject on making more equitable the tax acquisition system in which those earning more income pay more taxes, as the most important characteristic of his economic program.

Analysts of economic affairs believe that even though the policy on cutting the government's expenditures simultaneous with the hike in taxes can considerably reduce the government's budget deficit, it is noteworthy in terms of laying a negative impact in the investment and manpower employment rates. The reason is that the tax increase will lead to a drop in the inclination for investment and consequently, there will be absorbed less work force. This is at a time when Clinton in his address has promised to create at least half a million new jobs. It appears that the U.S. Congress will finally approve Clinton's program after the necessary discussions by next March. But it is doubted as to whether the unveiled program will on the one hand in practice entail a certain end to the current stagnation in America, and, on the other hand will cut the colossal budget deficit of the federal government. Basically, the U.S. capitalist system has over the past century experienced periods of stagnation and flourish in a recurring cycle. Now after a three-year period of economic recession, the situation has somewhat improved during the past few months. Some analysts believe that Clinton's program relating to a hike in taxes may halt the improving trend of the past few months.

Commentary on Clinton's Middle East Policy

LD1802202893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The U.S. secretary of state, Warren Christopher, in his capacity as Bill Clinton's special envoy to the Middle East, is due to arrive in Egypt tonight on the first leg of his tour. During his six-day tour of the Middle East, Christopher, after Egypt, will be visiting Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the occupied Palestine, and probably Lebanon. As to the question concerning the objectives of the U.S. secretary of state in his Middle East tour, one can find a response by considering the current issues in the Middle East, that is the stalemate in the so-called peace talks, and the problem of the Palestinian deportees. More significantly, based on the shift of power in the United States, the new Bill Clinton administration in fact views itself as the new sponsor of the talks, left unfinished by the outgoing Republican government. The issue which has, however, stalemated the talks process is the deportation of several hundred of Palestinians from the occupied lands. The talks between the Arabs and the Zionist regime were suspended by the Arab negotiators attending those parleys following the exiling of 415 Palestinians late last year. In this same connection America is trying, through removing the obstacles on the way of negotiations, to start the ninth round this April.

Even though Warren Christopher, on the eve of his tour of the Middle East, has expressed pessimism over the resumption of the talks, in the opinion of political observers, he will focus his efforts on convincing the Arabs about separating the issue of the Palestinians deportation from the so-called peace parleys. In the midst, it appears that the U.S. secretary of state will also make certain promises to the Arabs, in a bid to bring them back to the negotiating table alongside the Zionist regime. Recent U.S. posturing in support of the Zionist regime over the Palestinian deportations, on the one hand, and the U.S. pressure on the UN Security Council for checking any punitive measures against the Zionist regime, on the other, have caused apprehension among Arabs that the firm and age-old links of the Democrats with the Zionist regime will further direct a course of negotiations in favor of Tel Aviv. The reason is that the U.S. posture in support of the Zionist regime for nonenforcement of the Resolution 799, that calls for the repatriation of all the Palestinian deportees to their homeland, creates this problem that in the event the Resolution 799 is not enforceable, as to whether Resolutions 242 and 338 relating to the return of the occupied Arab lands is enforceable from the viewpoint of the Zionist regime and the United States. Therefore it appears obvious that the results of Christopher's visit, based on the priority being given to the peace talks in the U.S. foreign policy, would be significant in the opinion of the American rulers. U

Undoubtedly, the views to be expressed by Christopher at the end of his tour, will show as to what extent he, as the special envoy of Bill Clinton, has managed to realize the objectives of the U.S. ruling clique. However, irrespective of all these political moves, as to whether the regional nations, too, in the event of the resumption of these stalemated and futile talks between the Arabs and the Zionist regime, will attach any legitimacy to Tel Aviv, is a question with a clear cut response as already been conveyed by them to the whole world on the eve of the arrival of Warren Christopher in the region.

Commentary Questions Christopher's Mideast Tour

NC1802195493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Political commentary]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the special envoy of U.S. President Bill Clinton, is scheduled to arrive in Cairo tonight at the start of a nine-day Middle East tour that includes stops in Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, occupied Palestine, and maybe Lebanon.

What are the aims of this tour? Current events in the region, foremost of which are the so-called peace negotiations and the deportees, cannot be ignored in any assessment of the objectives Christopher wants to achieve during his tour. The new U.S. Administration under Clinton believes it inherited the negotiations, which have so far failed to yield any results, from the Republican administration. The deportee issue put a stop to the negotiating process. The Arab countries suspended the negotiations to protest the Zionist deportation of hundreds of Palestinians from their homeland at the end of last year. The United States is making strenuous efforts to remove the obstacles and problems impeding the resumption of these negotiations. It is preparing the way for the ninth round of talks in April, despite Christopher's statements on the eve of his tour that he was not optimistic about the resumption of the negotiations.

Despite all this, political observers believe Clinton's special envoy will focus his efforts on convincing the Arabs to separate the deportee issue from the negotiations. These observers add that the U.S. secretary of state might promise the concerned Arab countries something to get them to resume the so-called peace negotiations with the Zionist entity. The Arab countries are deeply concerned that the negotiations might tilt more than before in favor of the Zionist entity as a result of the close, special, and traditional ties between the Democrats and the Zionist entity. This is particularly true in the wake of the recent candid U.S. position supporting the Zionist entity on the recent deportations and following Washington's pressure on the Security Council to prevent it from imposing sanctions on what is called Israel.

The U.S. stand—which is completely and candidly biased on the side of the Zionist entity, its aggressive policy, and its disregard for Resolution 799—has raised serious questions about the fate of other international resolutions, including Resolutions 242 and 338, which call for the return of the occupied Arab territories and

Israel's withdrawal from these territories. From the U.S.-Israeli viewpoint, if Resolution 799, which calls for the return of hundreds of Palestinians to their homeland, cannot be implemented, how, from the same viewpoint, will the two basic Resolutions 242 and 338 fare?

It is now apparently clear that the new U.S. Administration is placing great importance in its foreign policy to the outcome of Christopher's current tour of the region.

Despite all these political efforts and their results, there is one question about the people of the region on these events: Does the resumption of the futile negotiations between the Arabs and Israel mean that the Arab people will accept this Zionist presence? History clearly shows that the people of these regions have always rejected such an event. The answer to this question came before Christopher's arrival. Will those negotiating without any regard for their people understand what these people are telling them and what they want?

Nateq-Nuri on on Elections, Iraq, Economy

NC1502124593 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 8 Feb 93 pp 1-3

["Exclusive" interview with Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri with unidentified RESALAT correspondents in Tehran "on the eve of the anniversary of the revolution"]

[Excerpts] [RESALAT] Could you please tell us what you see as the gains of the Islamic revolution on the eve of the 15th year of the victory of the revolution?

[Nateq-Nuri] The gains of the Islamic revolution cannot be condensed into a list of a few terse sentences, especially since we have not yet fully realized the dimensions of its greatness.

Anyone wishing to understand these gains need only visit a foreign country for a few days then enter Iran. He will realize what a massive task has been achieved. [passage omitted]

[RESALAT] What are the economic gains of the revolution?

[Nateq-Nuri] The economic gains of the revolution have been superb. You can make an elementary comparison. During the regime of the traitorous shah, 6 million barrels of oil were sold daily in a country with a population of 30 million. We witnessed the immense poverty and deprivation of the people at that time. Today we sell about 2 million barrels of oil per day with a population of nearly 60 million. Despite the fact that in the course of a cruel eight- year war, during which we lost all the natural resources and installations the people had made, we still stood on our own feet and are now on the verge of resolving our problems.

Today someone entering this center of Islam would never believe he is in a country that suffered an eight-year war. The factories, bazaars, and stores are brimming with goods and the people are in the midst of a busy and active life.

I agree that some of the pressures still exist, but if you compare conditions in our country with those in other countries, you will realize we are far better off. Despite all the setbacks and the crimes of our enemies, our services are collectively 10 times better than they were during the reign of the Pahlavi monarchs.

[RESALAT] Recently we witnessed a clash between Iraq and the Americans. How do you analyze this clash?

[Nateq-Nuri] Apparently the Iraqis wished to test the new U.S. President and they did not take the last few days of the Bush government in the White House very seriously. They thought that it would not be a very serious clash, but they were wrong.

[RESALAT] If the animosity of the United States and the allies is serious, why do they not topple him?

[Nateq-Nuri] It would appear that a dead Saddam is far more dangerous that a live one. First, in their assessment, Saddam's absence and a weakened Iraq would benefit Iran, therefore they are doubtful about eliminating him. Second, they have not found any satisfactory substitute for him. Third, they do not wish to terminate the war conditions in the Persian Gulf until billions of dollars are extorted from the coffers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates!

[RESALAT] How long do you think that the Arabs should remain enmeshed in this crisis situation?

[Nateq-Nuri] God knows, the Persian Gulf war was the greatest lesson of our era. We hope the Arabs will have learned this lesson from it and be able to identify who their friends and foes are and not resist Islam needlessly.

[RESALAT] Presidential elections will be held in the month of Khordad [22 May-21 June]. What is your analysis of these elections and what do you recommend?

[Nateq-Nuri] Our dear people will go to the polls to decide who their president will be for the next four years. Naturally, the people will once again pledge their loyalty to the system and will view these elections as a national referendum to vote for their president.

Of course the most prominent candidate is President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, but another candidate may come forth. God willing, Hashemi-Rafsanjani will take over the helm of the administration for another four years and will guide and lead the country.

His personality is indeed of value in the Islamic world. His awareness, acumen, and knowledge of international affairs and the internal issues of the revolution have made him a popular figure. You have witnessed the kind of welcome he gets when he visits the provinces. This welcome is in fact a mark of respect for the revolution and a tribute to the greatness of Islam.

I believe that the next elections will be unique and once again the people will transform the hopes of the enemy into chagrin.

[RESALAT] Some people do not take the subject of a cultural onslaught by the enemy very seriously and say that there is no onslaught, just a meeting of two cultures. In this exchange and intermingling, whoever is most convincing will succeed. These people claim that this is a way to eliminate the followers of the imam's line. They also wish to raise doubts about decrees the imam issued in his later years on music and other subjects. This is why they say that they can hear the footsteps of primitive thinkers with draconian views on religion and we should combat them. What is your excellency's views on the subject?

[Nateq-Nuri] I do not know how some people can consider the primitive thinkers as the threat when they do not have any office or affiliations with any faction, newspaper, magazine, or party and they air their opinions in restricted circles. They do not pose any major danger. The people should listen to the footsteps of cultural liberalism creeping into our corridors and this should be a more familiar sound for them. Those with the primitive views have not made a single film or staged any special plays, stories, or romances. Therefore, I can safely say that this group is not interested in any music, therefore we cannot blame them for presenting any low genre of music, etc.

In the recent assessment—which was intensively and systematically researched—on objectionable material in certain romances and movies, it was found that none of the primitive thinkers had a hand in them. This material contained motivation for the following:

1. Spreading corruption and obscenity.
2. Ridiculing sacred Islamic terminology, sanctities, and divine traditions.
3. Propagating debauchery, raunchiness, and homosexuality.
4. Consuming alcohol.
5. Encouraging young people to run away from home.
6. Insulting the clerics.
7. Propagating Western values and denigrating our own culture and honor.
8. Instilling the impression that girls who are outwardly chaste and noble are in reality extremely profligate.
9. Mocking religious chanting and so on.

These are all a product of cultural liberalism. [passage omitted]

In the Western lexicon, carnal desires and even lust for power are considered values, so how can we consider them values? These are the fetters of modernism. I do not want to deny the dangers of being too primitive-minded but I wish to state that the true danger to us is not from this front.

[RESALAT] Recently His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i elaborated on the respect and reverence for divine traditions and called on the Hezbollahis and basijis to be present on the scene and to defend the values of the revolution. What is your opinion?

[Nateq-Nuri] The sharp point of the arrow of the enemy's cultural invasion is aimed at our Muslim people. The fact that we believe in God and the resurrection, reckoning for our sins, the scriptures, the prophets, and the pious ones is considered a crime by liberalism. The enemy has experimented with all extraneous means at its disposal from the political to the military. Now the struggle has moved to the sphere of the mind and heart and our beliefs in these areas are being attacked. [passage omitted]

[RESALAT] His eminence once said that some are confusing our efforts at reconstruction with materialism. Could you please elaborate on the implications?

[Nateq-Nuri] Reconstruction has positive connotations and comprises all kinds of reconstruction, including that of individuals, society, and economic reform. There are some who misinterpret it as a rat race for attaining greater financial wealth and welfare, which is indeed disastrous. We are not in a rat race, as this is a bottomless pit, a decaying quagmire in which one gets sucked deeper and deeper. [passage omitted]

Now our production has risen and exceeds demand. Our stores are full and everyone is apprehensive about what to do! Everyone is aware of the stagnation of the market and no one seems to buy or sell. This is because there is no artificial profiteering.

There has to be a risk in the market; one gains, one loses. A market that guarantees a 400-percent profit is not a market. In the past everyone reaped profits and this was because the government was sustaining the losses! This is not correct and we should all be content with reasonable profits. We should think about the deprived strata. The gap between the poor and the rich was as great as between heaven and hell!

The culture of contentment and thrift should replace the culture of materialism, worldliness, and extravagance. I will not embark on moral preaching here, but I am addressing officials as well. They should adopt a policy to reduce the distance between themselves and the people. [passage omitted]

Iraqi Soldiers Handed Over to Baghdad Government

LD1802180893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran today handed 1,000 Iraqi soldiers who had entered Iranian territory in the course of the Persian Gulf crisis, over to the Iraqi authorities. The initiative was taken in line with the

Islamic Republic of Iran's humanitarian stand and in honor of the anniversary of the auspicious Ten Days of Dawn. The soldiers returned to their country via the Khosravi border. The Iraqi soldiers were released in the presence of official representatives from the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Iraqi Government.

Paper Claims 'Zionists' Killed Turkish Journalist

NC1802220493 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 13 Feb 93 p 20

[Commentary by the Political Affairs Department]

[Text] A report from Ankara yesterday afternoon says that a number of the fugitive monafeqin [hypocrites—Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] demonstrated outside the UN mission, shouting slogans against the Islamic Republic of Iran and accusing Iran of being involved in the recent incidents in Turkey!

It is interesting that the report on the Monafeqin's demonstration and statement was carried on most of Turkey's television stations! The question as to why the Turkish Government allowed the terrorist and criminal groups—who fled the country after killing and torturing innocent people in the streets and bazaars—to engage in such activities in the midst of the celebrations of the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution remains unanswered. These demonstrations come at a time when millions of Iranians have marched, shaming the opponents of the Islamic system of Iran and proving that the Islamic Revolution is not a weak tree that trembles at the opposition and animosity of the United States, Israel, and some Western countries and terrorist groups.

The fact that the Monafeqin are allowed to demonstrate in Turkey indicates that the Turkish Government still supports the terrorist groups, who are murderers of the Iranian people and officials. Hence, its claim that it does not support terrorist groups is untrue.

On the other hand, it has transpired that the Zionists murdered a Turkish journalist so that they could accuse Iran of terrorist activities and to mar Turkish-Iranian relations. The Turkish prime minister is also seeking to strain relations with Iran, exactly what Israel, opponents of the Muslim Iranian people, and some Western countries and anti-Iranian circles want.

It should be noted, however, that relations between the two Muslim fraternal peoples of Iran and Turkey will never be impaired. It would be better for the Turkish Government and anti-Islamic and anti-Iranian circles to wake up and smell the coffee. They should abandon all thoughts of deceit and artifice and should ponder their future.

PRC Deputy Foreign Minister Arrives 16 Feb

LD1702091293 Tehran IRNA in English 0711 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 17, IRNA—Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Yang Fuchang arrived here Tuesday night on a 3-day official visit to discuss mutual ties and international developments.

Yang who was welcomed at the airport by his Iranian counterpart Ala'eddin Borujerdi said that China intended to bolster its ties with Iran in all fields especially in cultural, economic and political spheres. He added that the two countries have decided to consolidate mutual relations through consultations between their foreign ministries while receiving guidelines from heads of the two states.

Borujerdi said, Iran and China were both important countries in Asia and the Third World, and should therefore expand their ties in all fields. He also hoped that the visit to Tehran of Yang would lead to further understanding between Tehran and Beijing.

Yang is to meet First Vice-President Hasan Habibi during his stay here.

Urged To Help Bosnians

LD1802104493 Tehran IRNA in English 0949 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 18, IRNA—The Iranian deputy foreign minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs, Ala'eddin Borujerdi, on Wednesday discussed issues of mutual interest with his visiting Chinese counterpart, Yang Fuchang, here on a three-day official visit since Tuesday.

Calling on China to take neccessary steps to stop the Serbs atrocities in Bosnia-Hercegovina, Borujerdi commented that the least that could be done was to lift the arms sanctions imposed on Bosnian Muslims.

China is one of the five permanent members of the Securtiy Council with the veto right.

Referring to the Iran-UAE dispute over the three Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf region, Borujerdi said the talks held between the Iranian defence minister and the UAE officials on the issue recently, revealed that the regional states could exchange views in a peaceful climate.

The Chinese official, pointing to the mutual economic cooperation with Iran, expressed hope that the seventh session of the Iran-China joint commission, due to be held in Tehran in a near future, would further boost the ties.

Yang said agreements to build a number of cement plants in Iran and supply underground wagons, signed during Iranian president's September visit to China, were at their final stage and their execution would start soon.

Larijani, Japanese Official on Trade, Security

LD1502121793 Tehran IRNA in English 1137 GMT 15 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 15, IRNA—Iran's security is not tied to stockpiling of armaments but on defensive preparedness and foreign policy of the country, said a leading politician here Sunday.

The remark was made by Vice-Chairman of the Majles Foreign Commission Mohammad Javad Larijani in a meeting with visiting head of the Japan's Economic Association Hiroto Sumiyoshi. The Japanese official is heading a delegation of economists, representatives of influential economic organizations.

Referring to the sensitivity of the Persian Gulf region, Larijani said that regional stability and development would be obtained only through collective regional cooperation. Larijani also briefed the Japanese delegation on the activities of the private sector, ways of investment and the economic reconstruction of the country.

Sumiyoshi said that Japan is greatly interested in Iran's foreign policy and called on Larijani to outline his personal viewpoints on Iran-U.S. ties.

In a separate meeting with Central Bank's Governor Mohammad Hoseyn 'Adeli here yesterday, the Japanese official expressed his interest in expansion of Tehran-Tokyo economic ties. 'Adeli briefed the Japanese delegation on Iran's economic reforms, reconstruction plans and promotion of production capacities.

Oil Minister Aqazadeh Discusses Projects

NC1602093093 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 3 Feb 93 p 19

[Final installment of a two-part "exclusive" interview with Petroleum Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh by unidentified staff correspondent in Tehran "during the auspicious Ten Days of Dawn" from 1 to 10 February]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] The Iranian petroleum industry is said to be technologically advanced, with expertise and very proficient specialists. Can you elaborate?

[Aqazadeh] The work carried out by the Petroleum Ministry, including major gas injection projects, streamlining of operations, secondary and tertiary recovery techniques, drilling operations, exploration, and prospecting, is among the most complicated and technical carried out proficiently by highly qualified Iranians.

This enables us to maintain the quality of the Iranian oil industry and its international potential [preceding word in English]. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Is it part of your plan to return to producing 600,000 barrels a day?

[Aqazadeh] Of course. The Supreme Economic Council [SEC] is discussing whether to return to producing 600,000 barrels a day or to invest elsewhere. The SEC is discussing the security, economic, and political aspects of a plan to upgrade production at Abadan.

[Correspondent] Are they talking about not upgrading our capacity at Abadan to the full?

[Aqazadeh] Yes. I said this must be decided in its political, economic, and security aspects. We are still rebuilding and streamlining our refineries. Next year, we will reduce production by 13 percent at our Abadan refinery. We will also cut back on production at Esfahan. [passage omitted]

In refining, drilling, and exploration, our circumstances are very favorable. We have devoted the second Five-Year Plan to oil to open new doors for activity abroad. We have initiated extensive activity so that we can embark on large, exclusive projects abroad and enhance our foreign exchange earning. In Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Sudan, and some other African countries, we presented some innovative proposals that are currently being discussed.

When a project is decided upon, our personnel will begin to explore and produce and establish refineries and factories for lubricants in those countries.

[Correspondent] Did oil feature in the latest talks with Tajikistan?

[Aqazadeh] One of the main problems in these countries is energy, on which we collaborate with them extensively.

[Correspondent] Could you please give us a succinct account of construction and reconstruction activities in the petroleum industry?

[Aqazadeh] As the first Five-Year Plan envisages, two refineries are under construction. One is at Arak, which we hope will become operational in the next [Iranian] year with a capacity of 150,000 barrels a day. This refinery can produce unleaded gasoline and will have an advanced control system, D.C.S. [acronym in English; expansion unknown]

The refinery at Bandar-e 'Abbas has a capacity of 240,000 barrels a day. It will become operational in 1373 [year beginning 21 March 1994] and will also produce unleaded gasoline. Another project affiliated with this refinery is in Esfahan and will be devoted exclusively to production for export. It will include a lubricant manufacturing unit, recently inaugurated by our president.

Fortunately, Iranians carried out the planning, installation, and operation of this complex, which can produce 184,000 tons of lubricant. We have also carried out extensive exploration work, the most important of which is the discovery of the "southern Pars" deposits with reserves of 100 trillion cubic feet of gas and 3 billion barrels of liquid gas with an estimated value of $200 billion at current rates [figures as published].

In the past two years, other oil and gas reserves have been located in the Persian Gulf, where we are drilling. Some valuable exploration work has been done in the past two or three years. Drilling in the Caspian Sea has found the first well for producing light hydrocarbons [preceding word in English] and there are signs that gas is present in these reserves. This motivates us to carry out extensive extraction projects in the Caspian Sea, which we have incorporated in our programs.

[Correspondent] Is the "Caspian-1" plan—a venture with the former Soviet Azerbaijan and Russia—part of your program?

[Aqazadeh] Yes. We have carried out geophysical operations in the Caspian Sea over an area of 15,000 km and the results will be clear by the end of this [Iranian] year. We also have a factory in the Caspian Sea area, set up with the collaboration of the Heavy Industries Ministry to assemble oil derricks. Once the assembly line becomes operational, extensive drilling operations will commence in the Caspian Sea region.

[Correspondent] Will "Caspian-1" remain as a joint venture or will it be exclusively Iranian?

[Aqazadeh] The projects I mentioned are 100 percent Iranian and the work will be carried out on Iranian territory. In the Caspian Sea we have signed a cooperation protocol with our neighboring countries. This protocol is being followed up and we will carry out joint exploration and expansion of our oil resources with these countries.

One major oil project of the past two or three years involves extensive pipelines to transport byproducts. These include the Bandar-e 'Abbas-Zanjan pipeline, the Tehran-Tabriz pipeline, and the pipeline in Hamadan.

Our investment in pipelines was 80 billion tumans in 1371 [year beginning 21 March 1992]. Spending was calculated on the basis of a foreign exchange rate of seven tumans a dollar, which was 3.5 billion tumans in 1360 [year beginning 21 March 1981], but is now 80 billion tumans [as published].

[Correspondent] At what stage in construction and reconstruction is the petrochemical industry?

[Aqazadeh] You know that we have not been in a favorable position as far as petrochemicals are concerned. Before the revolution, a massive Iran-Japan petrochemical complex was envisaged. It suffered so much damage during the Iran-Iraq war that it never became operational. Apart from this, we had no other project that would enable us to become self-sufficient in petrochemicals. The units we had before the revolution were so badly damaged that we had to embark on two major tasks, the first is expansion and construction and the second is reconstruction.

It was within the framework of this policy that we embarked on an extensive petrochemical project in Iran, one that cannot be compared with other projects. On a regional level, never have so many petrochemical projects been initiated simultaneously in one complex in any country.

We inaugurated the Tabriz petrochemical complex with a capacity of 250,000 tons of goods worth over $250 million. The Khorasan fertilizer factory was started with a production capacity of 850,000 tons to cater to the needs of the entire Khorasan province and neighboring regions. Then there is the massive petrochemical complex at Arak, capable of producing 550,000 tons of goods worth $600 million, the first phase of which we hope will become operational next year. This project will answer much of the country's petrochemical requirement.

We started to rebuild the former Iran-Japan petrochemical complex at Bandar-e Imam Khomeyni. It will produce 1 billion dollars of petrochemical products by the end of 1373. We also completed the Esfahan aromatic [preceding word in English] project, which the president recently inaugurated, and reached an annual capacity of 165,000 tons. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] The decisions and programs of the Petroleum Ministry, which has a key role in Iran's system, naturally affect the country's economy. What programs are envisioned for the second Five-Year Plan?

[Aqazadeh] Our most important goals for the second plan are in exploration and in boosting our foreign exchange reserves. We hope our vast land and sea resources will enable us to prioritize our exploration work.

Also planned is to invest extensively in expanding the country's gas reserves for domestic consumption and for export. The signs are that by the year 2000, gas will occupy a special place in international energy sources and our projects will be in a very favorable position. The role of gas in the country's economy will be more important. Our second priority will be investment in gas resources.

One aspect of our activity will be to begin private sector investment in petrochemical industries. This will also be a major priority in view of our valuable position in petrochemicals. Piping gas countrywide is another priority and by the end of the second plan, we hope to have gas piped to every part of the country. As for gas exports, we can predict that we will export 50 billion cubic meters of gas annually, God willing.

Aqazadeh Interviewed on OPEC Meeting's Results

LD1802231593 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1644 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Interview with Petroleum Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh by unidentified correspondent on the "Political Roundtable" program; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] Mr. Aqazadeh, as an introduction to the discussion, what is your analysis of the recent OPEC session and the trend in oil prices? How do you see the future of OPEC?

[Aqazadeh] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. You raised various issues in your question. I believe we have to examine each of them from various points. Regarding the general outcome of the conference, it followed two directions. The first point was the reduction in production, especially since the conference chairman had traveled to all member states and achieved the support of all these governments for a reduction in production. It was predicted that this part of the work in OPEC was easier. Of course, we believed that a reduction of one million barrels per day was not enough. We had proposed a reduction of 1.5 million barrels per day but considering the general agreement among all members, we supported that same one million barrels with respect to November's ceiling, which was 24.584 million barrels per day. Of course, OPEC's current production is higher than this. Some statistics predicted February's output at 25.3 million barrels per day and reported January's production at 25.1 million barrels per day. If we take this ceiling, a reduction of 1.5 million barrels per day or 1.6 million barrels per day would make sense. Therefore, this part of OPEC's task was over very quickly. In the very first day, following the negotiations between the ministers and in a private session, especially with the good cooperation between us and Saudi Arabia in this session, we completed this task very quickly.

[Correspondent] We heard reports that Kuwait had some problems with a reduction in production.

[Aqazadeh] Yes, well the second point is this issue of Kuwait. As you are aware, after the Iraq-Kuwait war, Kuwait was outside the quota. And the session had allowed Kuwait to produce as much as it could in relation to the reconstruction of its oil resources. Kuwait's production had increased on this basis to the extent that at this session, their oil minister announced that their production has reached the two million barrels per day mark. Therefore, he demanded a share of two million barrels if Kuwait were to join OPEC's quota system. This was the second part of the work, which took up most of the session's time. We had to convince Kuwait to enter OPEC's quota system, and it had to back down on its demand and accept a lower figure. This task took the most time at the OPEC session, especially on the last day; this was the only issue being debated, and the session took nine hours. In the end, with the efforts, Kuwait agreed to 1.6 million barrels and entered the quota system.

Of course, the supervisory committee also accepted that problems such as historical production and Kuwait's quota would be reviewed in the next session; and if their findings are acceptable, views will be revised. We therefore pursued two objectives in that session. In particular, the part of the discussions concerning the problems of Kuwait were obviously complicated. Usually OPEC faces a great deal of problems when dealing with countries that, for some reason, have left the quota system and want to return to it. That was one part of the answer to your question.

About how we see the future, the oil market usually pays attention to two issues. One issue is the ceiling decided by OPEC,, which is one section of the work, but the more important section that the market concentrates on is the stance of the OPEC member countries after the conference and their reactions to the market. That is what usually regulates market prices. Attention is particularly paid to major producers.

The stance we adopted after that session has been very positive, even though we distance ourselves with our capacity, but we decisively intend to reduce our production. We have decided to reduce our production to help raise the prices.

Saudi Arabia's stance in that session was very good and it defended the prices. The Saudis also announced that they will seriously reduce their production. It has been decided that Saudi Arabia should cut its output by 400,000 barrels per day, which will reduce its output to eight million. And now to the other countries.

As far as I am aware, the outcome of the session depends on the performance of Kuwait. If Kuwait is committed to the quota that it has accepted and strongly defends it, then the market will be strengthened. If the market sees that OPEC members have in fact reduced their production, particularly from 1 March when that agreement comes into force, then prices will rise somewhat, and in my opinion, the OPEC basket [preceding word in English] can reach $19 dollars, the North Sea oil would be above $20, and the WTA region [not further specified] can reach around $22. But if each of those countries adopt a damaging stance and display to the market signs that they do not adhere to the agreement, then I do not think that the prices will be strengthened and they can even weaken and bring about unsatisfactory conditions. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Aqazadeh, in the wake of the Persian Gulf crisis, we have been witnessing a relative consensus among the OPEC members. With this in mind, how do you see OPEC's future?

[Aqazadeh] OPEC is currently in a very precarious position. Especially after the withdrawal of Ecuador from the organization, questions are being whispered and raised on whether OPEC will survive or face gradual dissolution; and what will be OPEC's position in view of the decisions adopted by the OECD countries on oil, taxes, and the whole chain of these? Indeed, in my view, OPEC is in a very precarious juncture in its history. In the first instance, in my opinion, OPEC's survival will depend on the political climate among the countries, especially in the Persian Gulf. If the understanding among these countries in the Persian Gulf region increases and improves, and if the different viewpoints among these countries on the future oil situation in the world move in the same direction, then no, no threat to OPEC is anticipated. Of course, by this threat, I do not mean a short-term threat, I am talking about the long term, in the distant future. Particularly, when the consumer countries adopt a unanimous stance against—especially a clear discrimination against—oil, then clearly unity within OPEC will be imperative. I give you an example: In the recent session, when the world was faced with the unanimous stance of Iran and Saudi Arabia, OPEC assumed a very powerfull position, and the organization was regarded seriously. As I remember from the session, the stand adopted by the consumers was to wait and see what these two main producer countries had to say. A week before the OPEC session, the oil market was virtually stagnant, and everyone was awaiting the outcome of the session.

[Correspondent] As you are aware, the new U.S. Administration intends to place a tax on energy, and that issue could have various repercussions, such as its impact on the oil market and on the issue of substitute energy sources.

[Aqazadeh] One of the most important issues facing OPEC and the oil-producing countries at present, is this very issue. I believe that this issue plays with the fate of the producers. Hitherto, European countries have been earning high incomes out of all kinds of taxes, especially taxes on gas, which they have imposed in their respective countries. There have been two countries, Japan and the United States, that were against the tax situation. Now that the Americans are pursuing a new tax on energy policy, then naturally countries such as Britain and Japan will likewise pursue the same line. This clear discrimination that they are making with regard to oil in relation to other products will have two fundamental impacts: First, it will automatically reduce demand for oil; and on the other hand, it will put pressure on prices, hence preventing a rise in prices in view of, and in proportion to the market. They will take away any potential price increase in the market, through tax. That is a significantly dangerous signal to the oil producers, and the only factor that could bring about a positive relative balance would be unanimity and cohesion within OPEC. Of course, the consumer countries are now considering substitute forms of energy. In the long term, substitute forms of energy, such as atomic energy will not occupy such a strong position. The factor that will remain, and is today the focus of the Western world's attention and for which the Western countries are drawing extensive plans, is that of utilizing natural gas. Natural gas has become very significant for various reasons: First because, relative to other fuels, it is a clean source of energy; and second, it is acceptable to the consumers on environmental grounds, bearing in mind, that the environmental issue is currently of utmost importance to the world.

I completely foresee that as rules and regulations are being introduced on human rights, in the future, special rules and regulations will also be introduced on the environment and certain rules and regulations and limitations will be imposed on the countries that have environmental problems. Therefore, the most important issue... [pauses] Therefore, natural gas is important from the environmental point of view and also because of its price. It is cheaper than crude oil and cheaper than other sources of energy, and it has long-term guarantees. That is, gas agreements are usually drawn for over 20 years, between 15 to 20 and 30 years, and that provides sufficient guarantees for the consumer, knowing that it can be provided on a long-term basis.

By the year 2,000, gas will be most in demand, and in fact, natural gas will achieve an outstanding and extensive market by the year 2,000. If the countries that have gas resources equip themselves by the year 2,000 and make positive contributions and provide the needed equipment to their domestic consumption and to their exports, then they can be the winners in that case. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] As you are aware, some CIS countries have requested OPEC membership. Has OPEC accepted this request? And if yes, what effect will the trend of their membership have on OPEC?

[Aqazadeh] Let me say that in this session, we had one request from Kazakhstan to participate in the next session as an observer until they submit their decision on membership. Considering the fact that the entry of any of these countries must be viewed from various political dimensions, some of the OPEC members were forced to raise the issue with their governments. It was therefore decided to take back this request from Kazakhstan to our governments and ask for their views. If our governments' views are positive, than this request from Kazakhstan must be accepted. Of course, the positions of these governments, considering their situations, are different. For example, Kazakhstan is one of the countries whose future is perceived to be good. Considering its oil resources and the possibility of their expansion, it can be one of the members, especially since it has a low domestic consumption of oil. On the whole, we assess this issue positively and of course... [pauses] The Russian prime minister had also announced his country's interest in cooperation with OPEC to the OPEC secretary general. This was discussed by the members. I think the closer these CIS states get to oil-producing countries, especially to OPEC, regarding regulating the oil market and the political situation of the oil issue... [pauses] This can be viewed as positive.

[Correspondent] Mr. Aqazadeh, I would like to once again thank you for coming on the program.

Opposition Official on Tehran's Chemical Program

PM1602115493 Paris LE QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS in French 11 Feb 93 p1 6

[Interview with Saleh Rajavi, Mojahedin-e Khalq representative in Europe, by Henri Vernet; place and date not given]

[Text] Last month, Iran signed the treaty banning chemical weapons. "Tehran is deceiving the world," according to Dr. Saleh Rajavi, representative in Europe of the Mojahedin-e Khalq, the main Iranian opposition movement based in Iraq and led by his brother Mas'ud. According to the Mojahedin-e Khalq, Iran is pursuing a nuclear and chemical arms production program. These accusations are taken seriously by the new Clinton administration.

[Vernet] You protested the arrival in France of Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati who came to sign the convention banning chemical weapons. Why?

[Rajavi] Iran is now regarded as the main threat to peace, not only in the Middle East, but beyond it. We are not alone in saying this: NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner, Egyptian President Mubarak, Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and, more recently, the main American media have expressed their anxiety in this respect. The very day when—after being received by Roland Dumas—Velayati signed the treaty on chemical weapons, a mission of soldiers and Pasdaran headed by Mohsen Rezai, commander-in-chief of the Revolution Guards, visited North Korea. The aim was to complete the purchase of weapons of all kinds, include chemical weapons.

[Vernet] Who are Tehran's foreign partners?

[Rajavi] Mainly China and North Korea, and also Germany. But the latter is currently reducing its assistance. Did the Germans deliberately pursue this cooperation? It is difficult to know, because there are so many possible channels for gaining access to chemical weapons. For instance, Iran only recently made a double request for purchases from the United States: a chemical factory producing acrylic fibers and planes intended to spray insecticide. However, after carrying out an inquiry, the Americans reached the conclusion that these Iranian imports had a military goal and the White House imposed its veto at the beginning of January. Finally, Chinese and Iranian engineers are currently working on the installation of chemical warheads on Scud missiles delivered by Beijing or Pyongyang. So, when Velayati comes to sign the international convention, he is deceiving the world!

[Vernet] This treaty makes provison for means of monitoring the states which have signed....

[Rajavi] The experts know that they can be circumvented, recent examples prove it. The best proof of Tehran's tactical maneuver is that scarcely had he signed his initials than Velayati demanded the lifting of the embargo on advanced technology and precision products affecting Iran. However, the U.S. Administration is advising its allies to show vigilance toward this country. For instance, on 15 January, Japan decided to ban the sale of around 100 sensitive items to Iran.

[Vernet] However, Iran is not the only state in the region to be arming?

[Rajavi] Of course, but it does not conceal its desire to lead the Muslim world and to export fundamentalism. And Europe is not safe: Tehran is trying to gain a foothold in Bosnia, and Velayati has visited Albania. In the minds of the Iranian leadership, these Muslim communities could serve as a springboard for fundamentalism in Europe. The thinking differs widely, it is true, but why not try, as was done in Algeria?

[Vernet] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani has just said that Iran is only devoting $850 million, in other words a "small percentage" of its budget (and 1.5 percent of GNP) to defense. Do you contest those figures?

[Rajavi] Yes, because they are the result of deception and trickery. There are three exchange rates in Iran: the official rate of 60 rials to the dollar and the real rate of 1,500 rials to the dollar. However, moving from state to state, arms purchse contracts are billed at the official rate. This figure of $850 million must therefore be multiplied by 20 or 25 to obtain the real sum devoted to armaments. In reality, between 50 and 55 percent of the budget goes on defense, whereas the country's rebuilding only receives one fifteenth of the budget.

In the past 3 years, Iran has spent a total of $13 billion on its arms purchases. Of this, $5 billion went to China and Russia, and $4 billion to North Korea. It is the increase in the budget devoted to nuclear research which is the biggest: It has increased from $200 million in 1991 to $800 million last year.

[Vernet] What evidence do you have for all your allegations?

[Rajavi] Our sources are internal Iranian channels. Even within the army. Our estimates have been taken up and confirmed by the main American media which have compared them with other sources of investigation, notably the CIA and State Department. Finally, a Congress report takes up these statements.

Eleven Reportedly Arrested in Marivan Clashes

NC1902113093 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] According to a report from the party committee in Precinct No. 1, Marivan, southern Kordestan, on 1 February the regime's so-called Law Enforcement Forces in Marivan again harassed the city's roadside vendors, snatching cartons of cigarettes they were selling. When regime agents went to the regime's Tobacco Monopoly Department building to hand over the cigarettes, all the vendors, including those who sell cigarettes, attacked them and got the cigarettes back.

This time the regime's agents launched a stronger attack on the people and a brawl ensued. The people, disgusted with the regime agents' inhuman actions, valiantly resisted and beat up the law enforcement personnel.

These retrogressive individuals, who saw themselves at a disadvantage and at the people's mercy, called for help to punish the people as they wished.

The regime's back-up forces arrived with (KD-50) machine guns, but could not contain the people's hatred and fury or force them to retreat.

Some youths who were forced to attend the first day of the so- called Ten Days of Dawn celebrations gathered nearby. They joined in the fray, attacking the antipopular forces and inflicting blows and kicks on them. The city's youth taught the regime's agents such a lesson that the inhuman ones fled. Afterward, the regime's agents arrested 11 people and sent them to prison. There is no information on their fate.

On the evening of 11 February, some regime agents lit bonfires at the Shabrang intersection to celebrate the revolution anniversary. They insulted some youths who had gathered to watch so the youths threw stones at the regime's lackeys. The ensuing fracas continued for three hours and gradually spread throughout the city's streets.

Joint Opposition Statement on Bahman Anniversary

NC1602085293

[Editorial Report] (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian at 1730 GMT on 14 February carries an 11-minute "joint statement by the Democratic Party of Kordestan, Cherikha-ye Feda'i-ye Khalq-e Iran Organization, Feda'i-ye Iran Organization, Iranian Revolutionary Workers' Organization, and Rah-e Kargar [Path of the Worker] on the 14th anniversary of the Bahman revolution [11 February]."

The statement begins: "The storm clouds above the Iranian firmament are getting darker. The 11 February anniversary conjures up heroic memories for our people. This occasion has become one on which the rulers of the Islamic regime inter revolution victories."

The statement recalls events leading up to the revolution interspersed with vehement condemnation of the clerics. "The Islamic regime did not show the slightest desire to meet the needs of the Iranian people, who have reached the end of their tether, or to restore their rights; it resorted to inflicting brutality and hardship, destruction and disarray, and general oppression and lawlessness to the full."

A diatribe against Khomeyni's policies, "which deprived the people of their right to sovereignty and to decide their destiny and freedom," follows. The statement adds: "Resistance and a forceful, continuous struggle by the workers and toilers, the oppressed people, particularly the ceaseless heroic resistance by the Kordish people, and the vigorous resistance by women and other members of Iranian society—which has hundreds of thousands of prisoners being tortured and executed—shows that our people will not bow to despotism, exploitation, or reprisal."

Demonstrations in Mashhad, Shiraz, Arak, and Bukan in 1992 are recalled as the "turning point" in the people's political life. Reference is made to "the so-called cultural invasion, one of the chief instruments of propaganda for the leader of the Islamic regime" and the "people's attack on the reactionary and medieval norms and instructions that the government imposes on all aspects of social life."

The statement concludes by saying: "Bestowing the right of sovereignty" on any individual or organization but the people will result only in "greater unrest and bondage." It says: "This is one of the Bahman revolution's best lessons, the greatest guarantee for the victory of future revolution. May the Islamic Republic be toppled! Long live freedom! Long live socialism! Long live the right of the people to govern and the right of people to forge their own destinies! May there be democracy in Iran and autonomy in Kordestan"

* Baghdad Announces Sadr To Replace Kho'i

93AS0580B London KEYHAN in Persian 4 Feb 93 p 1

[Text] The Baghdad media, all of which is published under government supervision, announced that Ayatollah Mohammad Sadeq Sadr is the replacement for Grand Ayatollah Abol-Qasem Kho'i, the great source of emulation for Shiites who died last year in Najaf.

In an interview with AFP, Mohammad Baqer Hakim, chief of the Supreme Islamic Revolutionary Council of Iraq, who lives in Tehran, condemned this measure by the Baghdad government. He viewed it as pressure Baghdad is putting on the Najaf theological centers "to prevent the designation of Ayatollah Kho'i's real successor."

He added: Ayatollah Sadr himself knows that he is not worthy of this position, and he has accepted this position out of fear of the Iraqi Government and under pressure.

An important part of the clergymen of Qom believe that the only person who is worthy to succeed Ayatollah Kho'i is Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Golpaygani, who lives in Qom.

* Readers Request Return of Satiric Column

93AS0580D London KEYHAN in Persian 4 Feb 93 p 12

[Text] The column "Two Well-Chosen Words" on page 3 of the newspaper ETTELA'AT, skillfully written by the satirist Kiumars Saberi, was discontinued for some time and was replaced by a column called "Short and Well-Said," thrown together by Mohammad Javad-Hojjati, a preacher with little talent.

The readers of this newspaper, who were quite unhappy with this rearrangement, protested and asked why the managers of ETTELA'AT removed Saberi and replaced him with Hojjati-Kermani.

Things got to the point that the managers of the newspaper sought Saberi again in order to bring him back. Saberi was willing to come back on the condition that his column be on page three to undo the "unjust takeover." This was also done. Saberi is continuing his column under the title "Two Well-Chosen Words" and Hojjati-Kermani's "Short and Well-Said" has been relegated to the second page and still receives little attention.

Nepal

Accord Signed To Promote Exports to India

BK1602093593 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 16 Feb 93

[Text] India and Nepal have exchanged documents to promote Nepalese exports to India and to allow movement of Nepalese vehicles through Indian territory. The documents were signed in Kathmandu today by the Nepalese commerce secretary, Mr. Durga Prasad Pandey, and India's ambassador Dr. Bimal Prasad. The new provisions will come into force from the first of April next and simplify the procedure for preferential export of Nepalese goods to India except a small negative list. Movement of Nepalese private commercial vehicles is to be allowed from the border to Calcutta and Haldia. Under the third document, movement of Nepalese vehicles and goods through Indian territory to different parts of Nepal is also to be allowed.

AIR [All India Radio] Kathmandu correspondent says the letters exchanged today are a follow-up to the bilateral agreements reached during the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao's visit to Nepal in October. The Nepalese Government believes that the new arrangement will mark an important turning point in Indo-Nepal trade relations.

Air Agreement Signed With Japan

OW1702101993 Tokyo KYODO in English 0928 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Kathmandu, Feb. 17 KYODO—Nepal and Japan on Wednesday [17 February] concluded a bilateral air service agreement, officials said.

Nepals Minister of Tourism Ram Hari Joshi and Japanese Ambassador to Nepal Chuichi Ito signed the accord in Kathmandu. Ito said direct air services between the two countries should start in the summer of 1994 when Japan's new Kansai Airport in Osaka Bay goes into operation. Nepal's Royal Nepal Airlines will serve Japan, while Japan Airlines will fly to Kathmandu.

The Japanese envoy said with the upcoming direct air link Japanese tourist arrivals in Nepal will significantly increase from the present 18,000 a year.

Pakistan

'Text' of Kanjoo Speech on Foreign Policy

BK1802100593 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 18 Feb 93 p 8

["Text" of statement by Mohammad Siddique Kanjoo, minister of state for foreign affairs, opening the debate on foreign policy at the National Assembly in Islamabad on 17 February]

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 17—Following is the text of the statement by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs at the commencement of the debate on foreign policy in the National Assembly.

"I am honored Mr. Speaker, to have this privilege to address the people of Pakistan through their elected representatives on the foreign policy of Pakistan. We promise that the valuable views of both the treasury and the opposition benches will be fully taken into account by the government. It is our conviction that the country's external relations are a national issue and must enjoy bipartisan support from the representatives of the people.

Mr. Speaker, first of all it is necessary to be clear about our national interests and objectives. The primary objectives of our foreign policy are:

First, to safeguard Pakistan's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and second, to promote the economic and social development of the counter [as published] and to praise the living standards of our people.

I will endeavour to present to this august House the best assessment of the government with regard to the security environment facing Pakistan, the present dangers and challenges to our country as well as the opportunities which are opening up for our foreign policy.

Mr. Speaker, the bipolar world has disappeared. The present period is marked by fundamental transformations and transitions in international relations. The major currents visible in this tidal wave of change are:

One, the emergence of the sole super-power, two, the problems of economic and political transition confronting Russia, three, the outbreak of ethnic and national conflicts across the whole spectrum of Euro-Asia, four, the growing importance of Germany and Japan not only as global economic but also political powers, five, the emerging role of China as a strategic fulcrum in Asia, and six, the ambitions of India accompanied by its mounting internal problems and upheavals.

There currents of international change are sweeping the shores of Pakistan's strategic environment. Their impact is evident from the shifts in the foreign policies of all the regional states, especially our neighbour, India.

Mr. Speaker, it is essential that we should evaluate our security environment as objectively and unemotionally as possible. Let us remember that a decade ago Pakistan faced the threat of aggression from two fronts. Soviet forces occupied Afghanistan. There was talk of "hot pursuit" of the Mojahedin into Pakistan. Soviet aircraft bombed our border regions with impunity. Here was no hope of the return of the Afghan refugees. Today, although Afghanistan remains in turmoil, there is no military threat to Pakistan from the north. And, a large number of refugees have gone home and most of the others are likely to do so in the near future with honour and dignity.

Ten years ago, Pakistan also confronted a threat of aggression from the east. Large military exercises were held on our borders. Today, although the threat from India's large conventional forces remains alive, Pakistan is in a more credible position to deter the Indian aggression.

Thus, while our country faces serious challenges today, I would submit that the issues at stake are not those of life and death for our country. On the contrary, today Pakistan has the most dynamic economy in South Asia. What is more, Pakistan is now also the strongest democracy in South Asia. Freedom is declining in India, it is growing in Pakistan.

Mr. Speaker, our relations with India have never been easy. Today these relations are passing through a very difficult period. India has adopted inflexible positions on all issues between the two countries, from the core issue of Kashmir to the simple question of demarcation of the Sir Creek.

India seems to assume that, as the largest power in South Asia, it is entitled to have its own way weather [as published] India is right or wrong. We can never accept this assumption.

India's position on Kashmir is unjust and untenable. Through a process of political manipulation, diplomatic deceit and military repression, India has held on to occupied Kashmir for 45 days [as published]. Can anyone now doubt that the Kashmiri people—those who were not yet born in 1947 reject India's rule. Totally and completely the Kashmiris celebrate Pakistan's national day.

The [as published] observe a complete 'hartal' on India's national day. They support Pakistan's national aspirations, whether in politics or in sports. For us, this is no surprise. We know they are one with us. The world will realise this, sooner or later.

The Government of Pakistan has made untiring efforts to evolve a political solution to the Kashmir dispute. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has proposed a dialogue on Kashmir in seven meetings with his counterparts. India refused to discuss Kashmir in the five rounds of foreign secretary-level talks.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif therefore addressed a letter to Prime Minister Rao proposing a dialogue at their level in accordance with the Article 6 of the Simla Agreement. Unfortunately, the reply received from the Indian Prime Minister virtually foreclosed the avenue of any meaningful dialogue.

The only policy which India has practised in occupied Kashmir is brute force to suppress the freedom struggle of the Kashmiri people. This has taken a heavy toll of innocent lives.

Ten thousand Kashmiri men, women and children have died during the last three years at the hands of the Indian security forces. Amnesty International has estimated that 20,000 Kashmiris are presently in Indian prisons where they are routinely subjected to torture and are often summarily executed in staged "encounters".

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif addressed the United Nations Commission of Human Rights, when it opened its session in Geneva, in order to awaken the conscience of the world to the massive violations of human rights in Kashmir. It is high time that the world community takes a serious note of the atrocities being committed by the Indian forces in the occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

The Prime Minister's personal participation had a significant impact in the commission. We hope the United Nations will send a fact-finding mission to Kashmir to determine the human rights situation there. Those who champion the cause of human rights should uphold these rights in Kashmir. Those who advertise India as the largest democracy in the world must insist that India apply the principles of democracy in Kashmir and allow its people to decide their own destiny through a free and impartial plebiscite as envisaged in the resolutions of the Security Council.

The Kashmir struggle is a struggle for freedom and self-determination. It is an epic struggle, like the struggle of the Afghan people against Soviet intervention. It is a heroic struggle, like the struggle of the people of occupied Europe against the Nazi invaders. For anyone to describe this freedom struggle as "terrorism" is to give currency to a patent falsehood. We do not expect this from nations which claim to uphold justice and human rights.

The government of Pakistan is proud to support the liberation struggle of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, morally, politically and diplomatically. Pakistan has refrained from supporting the struggle militarily. Our self-restraint has been manifest. We took the most difficult decision—three times to halt Kashmiri sympathisers from crossing the Line of Control. On two occasions, we were obliged to use force to stop them. We will find it difficult to continue displaying such self-restraint if it is not reciprocated by India. The Kashmiri people, Mr. Speaker, are convinced of the justness of their struggle. The international community is a party to the pledge given to them through the Security Council resolutions upholding their right to self- determination. We have no doubt in our minds that the struggle of the Kashmiri people will be crowned with success before long and the truth will succeed ultimately.

Our difficulties with India have further intensified since December when Hindu fanatics were allowed to destroy the Babri Masjid, despite Pakistan's repeated warnings. Indeed, the Indian government had lodged a protest when this august Assembly adopted a resolution calling for protection of the Masjid. But demolition of Masjid exposed Indian claim of secularism.

A wave of anti-Muslim violence has spread across India in the wake of Ayodha. Thousands of Muslims have died and thousands more have been subjected to religious-cleansing by Hindu extremists often assisted by the police.

The government of Pakistan is making all possible efforts to secure protection for the Indian Muslim minority and for the Islamic heritage in India. We believe that it is best to promote these goals through the relevant international organisations.

We hope that with the advent of a new administration in Washington, Pakistan and the United States will establish a new and mature relationship on the basis of the principles of sovereign equality, mutual respect and non-discrimination. Pakistan has been and will remain a force for moderation and restraint in international affairs. We will continue to build on the areas of convergence and cooperation which exist between the two countries—such as their common desire to promote international and regional peace commitment to nuclear non-proliteration and conventional arms control, adherence to the principles of human rights, democracy and free market principles and collaboration in the war against drugs.

At the same time, it is our hope that the United States will recognise that Pakistan cannot be expected to accept unequal and discriminatory limitations on its sovereignty or its national security options. Since, he assumed office in October 1990, Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif has declared that Pakistan will not seek economic assistance from any source if this is accompanied by discriminatory restraints and conditions. No one should have any doubt about our determination to adhere to this principle.

Pakistan has offered adepuate assurances to the international community on the issue of nuclear nonproliferation. In the course of the development of its peaceful nuclear programme, Pakistan has acquired some technical capability in this field. Pakistan has taken a political decision that it will use this capability for peaceful purposes only and not to produce nuclear weapons. We will accept any arrangement for nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia that is equitable and non-discriminatory vis-a-vis India. We continue to believe that the proposal of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for a conference involving the United States, Russia, China, India and Pakistan could lead to the evolution of equitable and effective regional arrangements for non-proliferation and peace and security in South Asia. The Government of Pakistan appreciates the efforts that have been made and which, we hope, will continue to be made by the United States to promote such an arrangement.

In order to succeed however, the pursuit of non-proliferation and security in South Asia should be promoted on a basis of equality between Pakistan and India. So long as the United States continues to apply the discriminatory Pressler Amendment against Pakistan, India will have no incentive to be responsive to any meaningful non-proliferation initiative for South Asia. While the Pressler law continues to steadily erode US-Pakistan relations, New Delhi has no reason to accept equitable non-proliferation arrangements. Events have confirmed Pakistan's prediction that the Pressler Amendment will escalate rather than arrest the danger of nuclear proliferation and the threat to peace and security in South Asia.

Mr. Speaker, the decision by the US State Department to place Pakistan on the watch list of states allegedly sponsoring-terrorism poses a new and serious threat to the relations between the two countries. We believe that this move is entirely unjustified because, apart from the fact that the Kashmir freedom struggle is not a terrorist movement, Pakistan is not extending military assistance to the Kashmiri struggle. It is a totally indigenous movement and is sustained by glorious sacrifices of the Kashmiri men, women and children. I invite the impartial observers, journalists and media representatives to come and see for themselves how the brave people of the occupied Kashmir are struggling for their fight to self-determination and implementation of the commitments pledged to them by the international community.

Mr. Speaker, Pakistan and China enjoy a close and friendly relationship whose rationale derives from common strategic and political objective and the positive experience of long standing cooperation. Our time-tested and all-weather friendship with China remains a corner-stone of Pakistan's foreign policy and a factor for regional peace and stability. We are determined to persevere in our efforts to provide greater substance and content to our friendship and multi-faceted cooperation with China.

We believe that the Russian Federation will remain a great power and will play a significant role in world affairs, especially in Central Asia. Pakistan has welcoemd Russia's support for regional arrangements for nucleai nonproliforation in South Asia. We have also welcomed the desire expressed by Moscow to promote a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship with Pakistan in various fields, free of the doubts and prejudices of the past.

We find it difficult to reconcile the position taken on Kashmir by President Yeltsin, during his recent visit to India, with his well-known commitment to the principles of human rights and democracy and his bold recognition that the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was a 'mistake'. I hope that once he examines the Kashmir dispute more closely, President Yeltsin may acknowledge that 'justice' is on the side of the oppressed people of Kashmir. The government of Pakistan will continue its dialogue with Moscow to develop more balanced and cooperative ties on the basis of principles.

Mr. Speaker, Japan is Pakistan's largest trading partner and biggest donor of economic assistance. These relations are likely to develop further following the recent visit of our Prime Minister to Japan. The visit helped to create a better understanding with Japan on the issue of nuclear nonproliferation. We have opened a dialogue with Japan on this issue and note with appreciation that Japan's approach to nuclear nonproliferation continues to be characterised by adherence to the principles of equity and nondiscrimination. Therefore, we welcome Japan's more active role in promoting peace and security in South Asia.

Mr. Speaker, the emergence of the Central Asian republics into independence has opened new vistas for Pakistan's foreign policy. There are vast new opportunities for coperation in the economic, political and cultural fields. Pakistan can import the oil and surplus energy from Central Asia and sell its consumer goods. Pakistan offers Central Asia the shortest route to the sea. Our priority goal is to establish road and rail links with these republics. Several alternative routes are under consideration.

Pakistan played an active role in bringing about the admission of the Central Asian states, Azerbaijan and Afghanistan as new members of the Economic Cooperation Organisation [ECO]. The ECO, comprising 300 million people and covering an area of six million square kilometres will emerge as the second largest regional economic organisation after the European Community. The third session of the Ministerial Council Quetta [as published] was the first meeting of all the 10 ECO members. It adopted the Quetta plan which outlines the objectives of cooperation in various fields like communications, energy, trade, banking and human resources.

Pakistan is cooperating with both Iran and Turkey in promoting stability and progress to Central Asia, espectally through the ECO. Bilateral relations with Iran and Turkey have been further strengthened following the recent visits by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Prime Minister Demirel to Pakistan. There is considerable scope for the expansion of economic relations with both Iran and Turkey which is being actively explored.

The role of Afghanistan is pivotal in forging durable economic relations between Pakistan and the Central Asian Republics. In the past decade, Afghanistan was a barrier against the southern ambitions of a superpower. Today Afghanistan is our bridge to Central Asia. It is, therefore, absolutely essential for Pakistan to be ready to play any role as requested by our Afghan brethren in restoring peace in Afghanistan. We must continue our efforts, with other friends of Afghanistan, specially Iran and Saudi Arabia, to realise a durable ceasefire and to build a broad-based solution to the political divisions within Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, Pakistan was created as a homeland for the Muslims of the Sub-continent. Our ideological identification with the Muslim Ummah finds expression in our close and fraternal relations with the Islamic communities, our support for Islamic causes and our active membership of the Islamic Conference.

Pakistan enjoys cooperative and brotherly relations with the countries of the Gulf. The security of the Gulf has an important briefing on Pakistan's security. Pakistan strongly supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the states of the Gulf. We supported the restoration of the sovereignty and independence of Kuwait. We believe that the problems in the Gulf should be resolved by the states of the region on the basis of principles and by peaceful means.

Mr. Speaker, Pakistan's support for its Palestinian brethren has never wavered. We continue to suppoort the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to call for Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, including Al-Quds al-Sharif. It is our hope that the Middle East peace process will lead to a just and comprehensive settlement.

We deplore the inaction of the world communist [as published] in the face of the flagrant aggression and genocide against the Muslims of Bosnia-Hercegovina. Pakistan has asked for an emergency meeting of the Security Council to secure enforcement of its resolutions and to lift the unjust arms embargo against Bosnia. The American proposals on Bosnia are an important advance on the Vance- Owen plan. However, they still fall short of the demands of justice.

Mr. Speaker, Pakistan maintains close friendly relations with the African countries. As a part of the Third World, we have close identity of views with our African brethren on important international, political and economic issues. We extended resolute suport to the African liberation movements and made our due contribution in hastening the process of declination in the continent. We have condemned the policy of apartheid and called for political reforms to eradicate racial discrimination and to enforce majority rule in South Africa on the basis of one-man one-vote.

Mr. Speaker, Pakistan has sought to achieve its national objectives through adherence to the principles of international conduct enshrined in the UN charter in particular the sovereignty, and sovereign equality and territorial integrity of state and non-interference in their internal affairs and right of self-determination of peoples under colonial or foreign domination or occupation. Pakistan has sought to promote peace and security at the global and regional levels. We have pursued these objective in all international fora including SAARC, Common Wealth and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Increasingly, the strength and importance of states is measured by their economic growth rates, labour productivity and technological skills. We cannot afford to fall behind in the global competion for economic efficiency and trade advantage. In conjunction with the economic reforms introduced in the country, the government has launched a concerted endeavour, with the active guidance and participation of the Prime Minister, to enlarge Pakistan's exports, generate investment and acquire the most advanced and relevant technologies. This new emphasis in our foreign policy constitutes a major challenge. Success in realising the economic components of our foreign policy will reinforce national self-reliance and strengthen national security.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that distinguished members of the house should be made aware that Pakistan is a highly respected and valued member of the comity of nations. This should be evident from the following:

—Pakistan was elected to represent Asia on the UN Security Council last October by an overwhelming majority of votes in the General Assembly.

—There is one lone voice of dissent in our proposals for regional disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia that of India.

—Pakistan's position on Kashmir enjoys the support of the 50-member Islamic conference. The Kashmir cause has also evoked support in the European Parliament and in other western parliaments.

—The OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference] has unequivocally condemned the destruction of the Babri Masjid and called for protection of the Indian Muslims and the Islamic heritage in India.

—Pakistan is playing an important role in the UN's peacekeeping operations in Somalia, Cambodia.

—Pakistan served as the chairman of the "Group of 77" developing countries in 1992.

—The ECO has been enlarged into the second largest economic grouping in the world. Countries like Japan, Malaysia and others have expresed interest in collaborating with the new ECO.

—Pakistan has been given the honour to host the next Islamic conference of Foreign Ministers. This will be held in Karachi from April 25 to 29 this year and consider all the important issues confronting the Ummah at the present critical juncture in world affairs.

Mr. Speaker, because of time constraint, I have touched upon very briefly on the vital issues of our foreign policy. It is not possible to cover the entire range of our forceign relations in a short time. I hope my remarks will have illustrated the government's endeavors to promote Pakistan's national interests as vigorously and imaginatively as is possible in the current global and regional environment. I hope that during the course of the debate on the country's forceign policy, a free and candid exchange of views would take place. I hope I will have an opportunity at the conclusion of the debate to respond to the comments and observations made in this debate and to provide any clarifications that may be required.

Editorial Urges Ensuring Kansi Committed Crime

BK1802122993 Lahore PAKISTAN in Urdu 14 Feb 93 p 10

[Editorial: "Person of Pakistani Origin Charged With Murder of Americans"]

[Text] A manhunt is underway throughout Balochistan for Aimal Kansi, who was allegedly involved in the murder of two officers of the U.S. intelligence agency. Kansi, who was a resident of Quetta, has secured [as published] U.S. citizenship. After receiving his Masters degree, he went to the United States where he got a job with a courier service dispatching mail to CIA headquarters. He did not need any security clearance to enter headquarters. Two CIA officers were killed right in front of the headquarters and Aimal Kansi has been accused of it. A report says that Kansi has now arrived in Quetta and is absconding.

The U.S. authorities have been assured that if the accused is in Pakistan and arrested, then he will be handed over to the United States. Nevertheless, if he is arrested, it will be better to ensure that he committed the crime. Only then may he be handed over to U.S. authorities. If he is found innocent, however, he should then be given protection.

Sharif Urges Dialogue With India Over Kashmir Issue

BK1902102493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif has stressed the need for a dialogue between Pakistan and India to resolve all outstanding issues, including the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir. In an interview with the Indian daily, THE HINDU, he pointed out that the Simla Agreement calls for negotiations between the two countries to settle the Kashmir problem. He said Pakistan is willing to hold such a dialogue and that is why he discussed the issue with Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao in all five meetings he had with him at various places.

Describing the Indian allegation of Pakistan's interference in the occupied Kashmir as baseless, the prime minister reaffirmed his government's offer to accept neutral observers along the Line of Control. About the demolition of the Babri Mosque and its impact on bilateral relations, Mohammad Nawaz Sharif said it was a deplorable and tragic act which could have been prevented if adequate measures had been taken by the Indian Government.

ICO Official Criticizes India for Denying Kashmir Visit

BK1902100093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] India's refusal to give visas to members of the fact-finding mission of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] to visit occupied Kashmir is aimed at covering up its brutalities. This was stated by Ibrahim Bakr, leader of the mission, while talking to newsmen before his departure from Islamabad to Jeddah yesterday evening. Ibrahim Bakr, who is also the ICO assistant secretary general for political affairs, said that the purpose of the fact-finding mission's visit to Azad Kashmir was to see for themselves the victims of Indian atrocities and massive violation of human rights. The mission will submit its report to the ICO secretariat on the basis of information collected by it. The report will come up for discussion at the next meeting of the ICO foreign ministers in Karachi.

Earlier, the mission leader had a meeting with Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo, the minister of state for foreign affairs, and informed him that he was deeply moved to see the sufferings of the Kashmiris who have been forced to flee the Indian repression. Kanjoo appreciated the work done by the fact-finding mission for the implementation of the ICO resolution on Kashmir.

Chinese Minister of Supervision Arrives 16 Feb

BK1602093393 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 16 Feb 93

[Text] The Chinese minister of supervision, Mr. Wei Jianxing, has appreciated the idea of formation of an Asian Ombudsmen Association and assured Pakistan of their support in this regard. He said on his arrival in Karachi from Beijing as the head of an eight-member delegation that the purpose of their visit to Pakistan was to learn about the working of the office of ombudsman and to strengthen mutual understanding and friendship. The members of the Chinese delegation are due in Islamabad tomorrow. During their stay in the federal capital, the delegation will call on President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif besides a meeting with the Wafaqi Mohtasib [federal ombudsman].

Holds Talks With President, Ombudsman

BK1802151693 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The Chinese delegation led by Mr. Wei Jianxing, member of the Politburo of the Communist Party and minister of supervision, called on the president, Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan, at the Aiwan-i-Sadr [president's house] today. During the meeting, they discussed the importance and need of setting up the supervisory bodies to ensure efficient and clean administration. The president said although the Ministry of Supervision and the institution of ombudsman are relatively new in their respective countries, they are contributing a great deal to giving a practical shape to the concept of public accountability and inexpensive justice in cases of maladministration. The president expressed satisfaction at the visit of the delegation, saying that it symbolized the desire of the two countries to expand their mutual cooperation in hitherto uncovered fields.

The Chinese minister held formal talks with the federal ombudsman, Mr. Justice retired Syed Osman Ali Shah, in Islamabad today. During the talks wide-ranging subjects relating to further strengthening of bilateral relations between the two institutions were discussed. Both sides agreed to further promote, consolidate, and expand mutual cooperation for sharing of experiences, ideas, and information. Both sides also agreed to coordinate efforts for establishing an Asian ombudsmen association.

Earlier on arrival, the Chinese minister was welcomed by the federal ombudsman, Mr. Justice retired Syed Osman Ali Shah. Talking to newsmen, the leader of the Chinese delegation said enhancement of cooperation between the two institutions will enable the two nations to increase the utility and performance of their institutions.

Mr. Wei Jiangxing is visiting Pakistan on an invitation from the federal ombudsman.

Malaysia's Mahathir Meets Khan, Holds News Conference

BK1702094793 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] Pakistan and Malaysia have called for increased cooperation and greater unity among Muslim states for the progress and glory of Islam. The call was made at a meeting in Islamabad yesterday between President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and the visiting Malaysian prime minister, Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamed. The president stressed the need for increasing cooperation between Pakistan and Malaysia in various fields and asked the Malaysian prime minister for increasing imports from Pakistan to overcome the existing trade imbalance. The president told the Malaysian prime minister that Pakistan wants to gain from the Malaysian experience of notable economic development. During the meeting, both sides discussed bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and ways to further consolidate them.

Earlier, addressing a news conference, Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamed said his country is cooperating with Pakistan in the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and we will further enhance our collaboration in scientific fields. He said cooperation between Pakistan and Malaysia in the field of science and technology had been continuing since 1984. This cooperation will get a further boost in the days ahead.

The Malaysian prime minister, whose country belongs to ASEAN, also said that the member countries of ASEAN were keen to forge closer links with the countries of the Economic Cooperation and Organization in terms of trade and economic relations.

Replying to a question, the Malaysian prime minister said his country has no military pact with India and allowed Indian officials to visit his country only for training purposes, as was the case with officials of other countries.

About the rights of minorities, Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamed said Malaysia supports the protection of these rights.

Signs Joint Venture Agreement

BK1702145493 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Excerpts] The Malaysian prime minister, Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamed, was given a hearty send off when he left Islamabad for Karachi today on the last leg of his visit to Pakistan. The prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, bade farewell to the distinguished guest. [passage omitted]

In Karachi, Pakistan and Malaysia today signed a joint venture agreement to be undertaken by private sector companies of the two countries. The agreement involves two joint venture projects at Port Qasim. The first project involves setting up of a (?bunking) terminal with a holding capacity of 64,500 metric tons and annual output of 450,000 metric tons of crude and processed palm oil products. The other project to be set up is an oil refinery capable of processing crude palm oil. It involves an investment of $22.5 million. This project will be principally engaged in the production and supply of high quality red palm oil to local vanaspathi [vegetable] ghee manufacturers.

Supports Nuclear-Free Zone

BK1802162093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamed has voiced support for Pakistan's proposal on declaring the Indian Ocean as a nuclear-free zone. In an interview he said that Malaysia is also proposing the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Southeast Asia, adding that the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in our neighborhood of the Indian Ocean will be a welcome step for peace in the region. The Malaysian prime minister condemned the violation of human rights in occupied Kashmir and stressed the need for a solution to the Kashmir issue in accordance with UN resolutions.

Dr. Mahathir said that Malaysia wants to forge close ties with Central Asian countries through Pakistan and Iran. He said that cooperation among countries of the region will be beneficial for their people. Dr. Mahathir lauded Pakistan's recent economic progress and said that it is encouraging that despite an increase in population and the Afghan refugee problem, Pakistan has become a prosperous country. He said that in contrast to some developing countries, there is no poverty and indigence in Pakistan.

Defense Minister on Purchase of French Fighter Planes

BK1902094793 Karachi DAWN in English 19 Feb 93 p 1

[Text] Dubayy, Feb 18—Pakistan cannot rely on US Military support and has started negotiations with France and UK to fulfil its defence requirements, Pakistan Defence Minister Syed Ghaus Ali Shah said in an interview with DAWN here on Thursday [18 February].

He said in view of some recent statements given by the US administration, Pakistan cannot bank on US supplied high profile F-16 fighter planes. Thus Pakistan is considering purchasing Mirage 2000 and 2000-S fighter jets.

In this regard Ghaus had discussions with the French Defence Minister Pierre Joxe in Abu Dhabi who had also come to attend the International Defence Exhibition, IDEX '93.

"In plane replacement and addition, we are negotiating a deal with France to have these planes," Ghous said.

The Minister said that he had talks with his French courterpart and discussed a number of other issues.

After the Pressler Amendment, Pakistan has been badly affected in its defence procurement requirements. "As a sovereign and independent nation our aspect has to be seen. We hope that the new Washington administration will reexamine and reevaluate its policy towards Pakistan," Ghaus hoped.

In a recent statement the US declined to renew the lease of naval frigates given to Pakistan. The Defence Minister said that Pakistan required about 9 frigates on lease from the US. Lease of one has already expired late last year while the lease of few will be expiring this year and the rest by the end of 1994.

"We will prefer to renew the lease of these vessels but if the US Administration refuse then we are considering to acquire naval ships from the UK."

The minister said that he had encouraging talks in this regard with the head of the British defence delegation who was also in the capital to attend the defence exhibition.

Answering to a query that certain quarters in the American administration are pressing to declare Pakistan a terrorist state, he said Pakistan is handling the situation diplomatically and hopes that Washington will not take any step which could damage the relations between the two countries.

NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty]: He said that Pakistan has always pursued the policy of maintaining peace in the region and therefore it still maintains to keep South Asia a nuclear-free zone. "Pakistan is ready to sign a Non Proliferation Treaty provided India does the same," the minister added.

"We have been given an understanding that the US and some other countries are honestly trying to persuade India to sign the NPT."

Chairman of Joint Chiefs Leaves for Jordan

BK1702093493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] General Shamim Alam Khan, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff committee, has gone to Amman on an eight-day visit to Jordan during which he will deliver Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif's letter to King Husayn. He has gone there at the invitation of the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff committee of the Jordanian Armed Forces.

Canada Sees No Evidence of Nuclear Weapon Development

BK1802100693 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 18 Feb 93 pp 1, 5

[Text] Islamabad—"Canada does not feel Pakistan is fast developing a nuclear weapon," was the answer of Dick Gold, the visiting Programme Director of Canada's development assistance programme, when asked about the possibility of aid from his country being affected by the issue.

Talking to THE NEWS, the Canadian official said that although his country was located next to the United States, it had independent politics and gave development assistance according to its own priorities.

"We support the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and want all countries of the world to sign it. However, at least for the time being we are not prepared to link our development aid with the nuclear issue," he said.

"Moreover, we do not have any concrete evidence of Pakistan being involved in developing a nuclear weapon," he added.

Like all other donors, he was enthusiastic about the Social Action Programme (SAP) formulated by the government for improving social indicators in the country which, according to him, were "worrisome."

He was all praise for the free market economic policies of the government. He said he specially wanted to see Pakistan developed in the field of industry and trade.

Comparing the Pakistan of today with what it was two years before this correspondent was born, when Gold first visited Pakistan, he said, "I find the society has grown much more traditional and conservative now."

At the same time, he maintained, Pakistan had achieved considerable progress over the years, if judged from the point of affluence in society.

The Canadian assistance programme for Pakistan, he maintained, was aimed at helping the country achieve its development targets and was not at all subject to any conditionalities by the Canadian government.

Sri Lanka

Official Reviews Exports to EC, North America

BK1702120393 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 17 Feb 93

[Text] The European Economic Community and North American regions have become major importers of Sri Lankan products. More than 60 percent of the exports are made to these countries. This is stated by the chairman of the Sri Lanka Export Development Board [EDB], K. Gunaratane, in an interview with LANKAPUVATH yesterday. There had been as much as 38.6 percent growth rate in exports from Sri Lanka to the European Community during the last five years.

The EDB chairman stressed the need for regional cooperation among SAARC countries to penetrate the European single market. This will increase the value and the volume of exports from the South Asian region to the European Community. The EDB chief said that Sri Lanka's garment industry will benefit if countries such as Portugal and Spain gradually withdrew from the EC due to the free movement of garments from developing countries. (?Soft) toys, handicrafts, and food items will be the country's export priority to the European Community. Negotiations are now underway with the European Community over tax concessions on certain items such as plants, cut flowers, and gherkins.

'Anti-LTTE Tide' in Jaffna Increasing

BK1902105693 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0917 GMT 19 Feb 93

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 19 Feb (LANKAPUVATH)—About 10,000 Tamils who were stranded on the Jaffna mainland were reported Saturday [13 February] demonstrating against the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] demanding that the Tigers lift the blockade of the main Jaffna-Colombo A-9 Highway, particularly as the Sri Lankan Government has said that this highway which is under the control of the military at Elephant Pass, will not be made use of to march on Jaffna.

Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that the demonstrators, all civilians, who were returning to Colombo after visiting their relatives, were shouting anti-LTTE slogans and calling for freedom from terror in Jaffna.

There were also reports that there were wall paintings in Jaffna town demanding the removal of the LTTE blockade of Elephant Pass.

The reports further stated that the anti-LTTE tide in Jaffna has risen to never before levels and if the situation continues for some time, there could be an uprisings against the terrorists. The people of Jaffna were now suffering grave hardship due to intransigence of the LTTE who were insisting on the removal of the security forces' camp at Pooneryn as a pre-condition to discuss the opening of a safe passage to the Sri Lanka mainland across Jaffna Lagoon from Sangupiddy and refusing to lift their blockade at Elephant Pass.

The sources said the LTTE was losing several millions of rupees daily due to effective naval blockade of Jaffna Lagoon which has been declared a no-go-zone by the government. Tigers charge Rs. [rupees] 1,500 per civilian to cross the lagoon by boat.

In addition, they were unable to move their men and logistics to and from the mainland.

There were indications that the LTTE leadership was showing signs of panic and going around the peninsula threatening to kill all those opposing him.